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THE ENEMY'S CAMP

CHAPTER XIX

CICELY had hurried off to the boat with unusual speed. Not until she was settled in the stern, with the rudder-lines carefully crossed, did she breathe freely. Then she called for Martin to supply her with what she thought necessary for the sport of rowing, a book, cushions, and some selected greengages; these articles represented her minimum of equipment when taking exercise. Doris sat down to the sculls, and Martin pushed the voyagers off into mid-stream. But they did not remain long in that perilous position, for at the first turn they ran aground, thereby upsetting Miss Yonge's sketching-basket, which was propped in the bows.

"You've got your lines wrong, Cicely," protested Doris.

"Oh dear, I forgot to remember that," Cicely admitted. "Can you reach the boat-hook?" Doris could; but in pushing off she lost a scull, which was only recovered by a desperate clutch that shook the other into the water. This, however, was easily re-captured while the boat drifted very slowly back again.

"Don't row till they're quite dry," said Cicely; "and I'll try to steer." She wobbled the rudder energetically, without, however, altering the direction of the boat which, rather to her surprise, held on its slow course.

Cicely was resigned and Doris thoughtful. The uncrossing of the lines having failed to alter matters, the younger Miss Neave abandoned speculations about the coxswain's art. She never could be sure which string to pull, but as she usually pulled the wrong one she had resolved to try the experiment of changing hands, and even this had produced no very satisfactory result.

Usually, of course, to drift pleasantly would not have troubled her, but as it was she suddenly heard her aunt's voice uplifted in expostulation with the uncomprehending male.

"Pull!" she said with unexpected energy. "We shall be running into one of those things called 'Dangerous'; you always do when one is having a nice time on the river."

Doris obeyed, and they meandered elegantly up towards the bend.

"You'll run us aground," protested the rower.

"Oh, no, dear; I quite remember now. When I go so," Cicely tugged gently at one string, "you go so. And when I go so," here she pulled the other, "we go so. I've tried it several times and it's always the same. But when I pull both hard, or don't pull at all, it doesn't seem to make any difference except that we always go a little to the right."

"Well, I wish you'd keep us a little straighter," said Doris mildly; "I don't think it would be quite so hard for me."

"But the river isn't at all straight," objected Cicely with triumph. "Now we've got to get round the corner. Let me see; so—yes, and it goes so. Oh, I must pull the other string,—"

This she did with a will. Luckily Doris counter-balanced with a crab on the needed side, and they achieved the perilous passage,—to run harmlessly into some reeds.

Though on the same side as the camp they were fairly well screened from observation, and very firmly fixed alongside the bank.

"No, don't push it off again," said Cicely; "you'll lose the oars again; and that tree's quite pretty enough for you to sketch."

Doris acquiesced meekly and began to undo the portfolio. The topmost sketch displayed a church-tower in a promising way to completion. It did not escape Cicely, though her friend would have covered it up. "Not quite finished yet?" asked Cicely slyly. "Were you interrupted again?"

"No, the boys didn't—" Doris paused with a slightly embarrassed air.

"He came to rescue you, in case?" Cicely suggested.

"He's fond of sketching, and he gave me some hints," said Doris still somewhat embarrassed. "I must go again to carry them out," she added.

"Under tuition?" Cicely's gravity was praiseworthy.

Doris looked at her in some wonder. "Tuition?" she repeated.

"I thought you said he was a schoolmaster, dear."

Doris admitted this point. "He did tell me a good deal. He says there is a fine old oak which hid King Charles after the battle of Worcester, standing all by itself in a glade over there,"—she pointed towards the west—"I shouldn't have known of it if he hadn't."

Cicely smiled to herself. Her opinion of the intelligence of the scholastic profession began to rise rapidly. She was on the point of testing her friend's innocence, but refrained nobly. Doris might then not go sketching in the expected quarter.

"I thought you wouldn't have got far," said a somewhat scornful voice from the bank.

"We took ever so long to get here," returned Cicely in self-defence.

"You would if *you* steered," said Agatha. "Are you sketching, Doris?"

"Yes, I was going to, but if,"—Doris began to put up her things unselfishly.

"No, do go on, dear, it's such a pretty view. We'll take a turn round the field." Agatha's glance at Cicely was a youthful reproduction of Aunt Charlotte's ominous expression during lunch. Cicely felt rebellious; she was very comfortable, and the greengages were deliciously ripe and fresh. However she rose, under protest if in silence, and jumped out with surprising decision. Her usual leisurely disembarkation was a thing that counted somewhat on assistance. The sisters went off together.

"We're going back to town directly, to prevent it happening again," began Agatha abruptly.

"To prevent what happening again?" asked Cicely rather timorously and with a rapid review of recent events.

"It's Doris," said Agatha with indignation. "I should never have thought it of her, never."

Cicely was relieved. She could even have smiled, but—going back to town! That was indeed a catastrophe,—when there might be other kinds of fish to catch too. She must be diplomatic. "What's the matter with Doris, dear?" she returned. "I didn't notice anything unusual."

"Aunt Charlotte saw her walking with a strange man, who was carrying her things."

"How dreadful of her!" Cicely assented. "Was he a nice man?"

"I suppose she thought so, but Aunt Charlotte didn't,—quite rightly," said Agatha. "Anyhow she says he's one of the house-boat and she's going back to Ealing at once."

"If it was only she—" thought Cicely. Aloud she said, "One of those horrid criminals?"

"They're not horrid criminals," Agatha retorted, warmly but unguardedly.

"Oh!" was all Cicely said, but her expectant look evidently demanded a sisterly explanation. It expressed plainly enough, "Why have *you* changed your mind?"

Agatha avoided this look but conceded the explanation. "One of them was very good to me," she said.

"Oh!" said Cicely again. "You've met one of them too—like Doris I mean," she added hastily. "What was he like?"

"He was a doctor. He saved me from a mad cow. He was very kind, and to-day—" Agatha stopped. Her tale was not being told exactly as she could have wished.

"And to-day he saved you again?" suggested Cicely amiably. Talbot was not a doctor, though she knew now enough about the house-boat to be aware that there was such a person on board.

"Don't be silly," said Agatha with a creditable attempt at severity. "He goes to the shop. Of course he asked me how I was after my fright—"

"And carried your things for you?" Cicely was perfectly at her ease now; she was in the best of company, and she had half a mind to narrate certain facts not unconnected with angling. Yet, if confidence is pleasant, still more pleasant is a sense of superiority, albeit temporary, over an accredited paragon. "I'm afraid you're just as bad as Doris," she said judicially; "—that is, just as unlucky," she amended.

The first idea was new to Agatha, who defended herself hotly. "It wasn't my fault," she insisted.

"No, the cow's," Cicely admitted; "I quite understand, dear. But what will Aunt Charlotte say? I think I shall have to chaperone you two about."

Agatha would have liked to be scornful, but Cicely's air of superior righteousness rather baffled her. She tried to think things out. "He ought not to have come twice," she pronounced.

"Which he? Yours or Doris's?" began Cicely innocently, but she ended with, "Well, of course Doris's. Yours was a doctor, and of course he had to see that it was all right."

Agatha was not convinced of Cicely's good faith, but her position was insecure. "We don't want to go back to town," she stated.

"Of course you don't, dear, with your health wanting to be looked after—I mean, with the sketch to be finished—"

"Be serious, Cicely." Agatha was getting really provoked.

"Certainly, dear. Yours was an accident and it's quite all right; but we've got to find out about Doris. It would be dreadful if she got herself engaged to one of those horrid house-boat people,—of course doctors aren't horrid—but if it was only an accident we can make it right, you know."

"Aunt Charlotte says—" began Agatha.

"She always *says*, dear," Cicely returned not very dutifully. "Luckily she always talks to Uncle Henry first. We mustn't let her talk to Doris."

"I'll speak to her myself, then," said Agatha with decision. They turned back towards the boat.

Meanwhile the unconscious Miss Yonge had begun a new sketch; that is to say, she had chosen her pencil, and sharpened it to a satisfactory point, and then she had fixed her paper; after which she had looked at the subject proposed so long and carefully that she fell into a contemplative mood, her thoughts insensibly leading her towards a certain church-tower.

"Doris, you really shouldn't." Doris looked up surprised, and encountered Agatha's determined gaze with innocent eyes.

"You shouldn't have been seen; it was very careless of you," explained Cicely.

"Aunt Charlotte," began Agatha.

"Would be dreadfully distressed, if she knew how you had been annoyed," continued Cicely.

"What is it, dear? What have I done? I do hope I haven't hurt her cups or anything."

Cicely laughed, but Agatha was stern. "I'm afraid you must have encouraged him," she declared.

Doris blushed indignantly. "I don't know what you mean," she said, having just realised what they were talking about.

"You must tell us how it all happened," said Cicely insinuatingly. "It's such fun. You mustn't keep all the adventures to yourself. Why, if it had happened to Agatha or me,—she's quite jealous of you. Now what's he like?"

Agatha had become silent under Cicely's treatment, and Doris was gradually induced to tell all the story.

"It's such a pretty beginning, isn't it?" Cicely appealed to Agatha. "And he's got curly hair and is tall. Only, if you want to finish your sketch to-morrow, another path—" Cicely smiled suggestively.

"But why?" enquired Doris.

"Because, when he carries your things back again—"

"Why should he?" protested Doris, beginning to blush a little.

"You don't think he'd let you carry them yourself?" Cicely caught her up. "Aunt Charlotte must not see. You did it very cleverly—"

"Cicely, how dare you?" Doris was getting really angry now.

"It's not your fault, dear; don't be so vexed. But he will come again to-morrow."

"How do you know? Why should he?" Doris fell back on her old lines.

"Agatha could tell you, dear." Cicely saw that Agatha was about to give some really proper advice. "He comes after her just the same. Only you need neither of you mind. Agatha's 'he' is a doctor, and yours is a schoolmaster, isn't he?"

"Oh, I shall never, never go near that church again," Doris complained.

"But Agatha will go to the shop though," Cicely observed; "that is, if we don't all go back to town."

"Oh, dear, has anything happened? Is anybody ill?" Doris forgot her own affairs at once.

"It was just a figure of speech," Cicely put in hurriedly before Agatha had the chance of explaining. "Only Aunt Charlotte saw your schoolmaster and thought he was a tramp or a burglar or something. But if you let me tell her how it all happened it would relieve her mind. I believe she's sending Uncle Henry for a guard or a policeman or a beadle to parade round the camp."

"Yes, perhaps you had better explain," conceded Agatha with meaning. "I'll wait here."

"You can tell me which is the nicer, the schoolmaster or the doctor, when I come back," laughed Cicely, who saw that Doris was still in some danger of having good advice.

Mrs. Lauriston was already packing up when Cicely reached the camp, and Martin was collecting heavy articles. Her uncle was nowhere to be seen, and Cicely resolved to be unseen herself. She reconnoitred from afar, noting with alarm the vigorous manner of Aunt Charlotte's movements. After a while she saw her uncle returning from the direction of the farm. She executed a flanking movement and effected a junction.

"Uncle Henry," she said in low tones; "do come here a minute." Mr. Lauriston recognised the arrival of supports. He took in the enemy's position with the eye of an ex-volunteer, and prepared for a council of war. "We're not going, are we?" she asked.

"The waggon is ordered," he replied rather tamely.

"When for?"

"To-morrow morning. We move, but whether to Bel Alp—"

"I suppose we shall have to move,"—Cicely could hear the sounds of packing—"but need we move far? We could get quite out of reach so easily. We might never have left our old camping-ground."

"The house-boat's not there now," observed her uncle.

"Isn't it?" Cicely's air of naïve surprise was perfect. "I suppose you ought to know, Uncle Henry," she added slyly. "Now I'm going to tell Aunt Charlotte how it happened, and perhaps we mayn't go back to Bel Alp after all. You'd miss the house-boat, wouldn't you? So you must help." She led the advance in open order, commanding the supports to bring up the rear.

Aunt Charlotte saw her approaching. "Oh, it's Cicely," she said. "Make yourself useful, child, and count the tea-cups. Be careful of the cracked one; it's the only moustache-cup we have. I can't imagine what that girl was thinking of; here's one all over some horrid mess of paint; I'll never drink out of it again; green paint, too, which is sure to be full of prussic acid or strychnine or something;—just like her!"

"Oh Aunt Charlotte, it's all a mistake; she told me all about it," responded Cicely in an ingenuous voice.

"I should hope she didn't. Five men on a house-boat!" replied Mrs. Lauriston in warm confusion.

"But it can't be the house-boat, Aunt Charlotte," Cicely persisted. "It's gone; Uncle Henry,"—she pointed to Mr. Lauriston who came up—"says so. He was walking near our old camping-ground this morning."

"Gone?" repeated her aunt. "Why wasn't I told, Henry? I hate concealments. But that makes no difference at all. We must go back to Bel Alp."

"But why, Aunt Charlotte?" Mrs. Lauriston met the innocent gaze in a somewhat embarrassed fashion. No, she could not tell Cicely; it might put ideas into the child's head, as she had said already. "Agatha says," pursued her niece, "that you thought Doris was being molested; but it wasn't so at all."

"I should hope not. But, in case it occurs again——"

"Oh, but it can't, Aunt Charlotte. A lot of rough men came when she was sketching and tried to steal her paints. And then a strange gentleman came up and drove them away, and as Doris was frightened he carried her things. She was afraid to tell us for fear we should be alarmed. And he didn't want to intrude."

"That's how it was, was it?" said Mrs. Lauriston a little mollified. "But she ought to have told me at once; I am not easily frightened." Mr. Lauriston looked as if he endorsed this sentiment, while his wife considered the question. "But," she said presently, "we've ordered the waggon, and the things are half-packed, and your uncle has telegraphed to Martha."

"I can easily send another to put her off," said Mr. Lauriston.

"Another telegram! You men think nothing of telegrams. Such an expense too!" returned his wife with indignation.

"Not so great as going back to Bel Alp," said Mr. Lauriston valorously.

"And we are so comfortable here," put in Cicely.

"Not half so comfortable as we were before," exclaimed her aunt, "if those detestable young men hadn't come. I declare I've half a mind to go back."

At this point Mr. Lauriston showed himself a strategist. "I think, as you have decided on it, we may as well go back to Bel Alp," he said.

"What are we to do when we get there?" Cicely asked.

"Stay there," responded her uncle gloomily. "I can't afford any more travelling this year."

"Oh, we'll pull down the front blinds," laughed Cicely, "and pretend we're at the seaside, as Mr. Waterhouse did last year. Only everybody will know, of course."

"We ought to have stayed where we were," said Aunt Charlotte in decided tones. "Going back at the beginning of August! Do you want to make us ridiculous, Henry? We should be expected to pay ready money at the shops, and they wouldn't leave parcels without being paid. If you had told those men to go away at first it would have saved all this trouble. They showed very good taste in moving of their own accord. We shall go back to the old ground to-morrow morning."

And so it was settled, not wholly to Cicely's satisfaction. To-morrow morning she had meant to spend in fishing; but anything was better than a return to Bel Alp.

CHAPTER XX

"No," said Talbot, "I have *not*." His tone can only be described as snappish, and he addressed himself to his lunch in the surly manner of one who eats to keep up his strength rather than to appease hunger. William, who had innocently enquired whether his friend had caught anything, saw that something was amiss and left him alone. Conversation, however, must be sustained, so he turned to Majendie. "Did you get those eggs all right?" he asked.

"No," said Majendie briefly.

William looked at him in surprise. "Why not?" he enquired in a tone bordering on irritation.

"I forgot," Majendie replied in a tone of similar tendency, and with a resolute snap of his mouth.

"How the devil do you expect to be fed if you don't fetch the food?" demanded William, now justly annoyed.

"Food be damned!" retorted Majendie. "You all eat a lot too much; every one does, as you would know if you had had my professional experience." Therewith he adjusted his eye-glasses, rose from the table, and marched off in dudgeon.

William looked round for sympathy, but Talbot was still eating tongue and bread in moody silence, and the Admiral was rolling a cigarette with an air of haughty disdain both of the cigarette and of his surroundings. Charles had not yet returned.

William did not find the Admiral's expression promising, but he addressed him. "What's up with Majendie?"

"I really could not say," returned the Admiral icily, and then, as though much offended at being spoken to, he also rose from his seat and went his way.

William looked after him in indignation. "Tell that ass Majendie," he cried, "that he won't get any supper unless he brings that food as he promised." The Admiral drew himself up still more stiffly and vouchsafed no answer.

William swore a little at the injustice and wrong-headedness of this behaviour and the unaccustomed sound roused Talbot from his reverie; or perhaps it was that, after meditating on gloomy matters sufficiently, he had come to a determination. "Couple of fools," he observed. "What do we want? Eggs?"

"Yes," said William rather stiffly, "and bacon."

"All right," replied Talbot. "I'll get them. I'm going that way presently." So saying he picked up his rod and basket and departed, leaving William to ruminate on the curious epidemic of ill-temper that seemed to have fallen on his party.

He was, however, relieved to see that Charles, who was approaching, showed no signs of having caught the infection, though he looked rather thoughtful. They exchanged a few words on indifferent topics (it had now come to be a recognised thing on the house-boat that Gladstone bags, imaginary or real, were excluded from conversation), and William told him of the obvious dissatisfaction of the other three, to which Charles listened with a glad smile. It was pleasant to hear that things were not going comfortably for the conspirators. Then William went away to fish, leaving Charles to eat his lunch and to wash up.

Charles, as has been intimated, was thoughtful. An incident had occurred during the morning which had caused him to revolve his plans. He had reached the rendezvous in the wood with his two bottles and the glasses, but had not found Mr. Lauriston there, and after waiting for some time had decided that he could not be coming, when a respectable-looking individual with mutton-chop whiskers suddenly appeared and addressed him. "Excuse me, sir, for speaking to you, but might you be the gentleman that is looking for a Gladstone bag?"

Charles asked eagerly if the stranger had seen it. No, the stranger had not seen it, but he brought a message;

and then Martin, for it was he, proceeded to tell Charles that Mr. Lauriston much regretted being unable to come that morning, as he was under the urgent necessity of moving his camp. Charles gathered particulars as to the spot chosen for the removal, and learned that it was no other than the old site. Martin, it appeared, who was conveying the boat down-stream, had been privately instructed by Mr. Lauriston to stop and tell Charles of the occurrences on his way. Charles was not too much surprised to remember the duties of hospitality, and he made Martin drink the bottle of beer that had been intended for his master, a feat which he was willing enough to perform. Then he dismissed him with thanks, and an intimation that if he should come across such a thing as a Gladstone bag his services would not be forgotten.

Martin rowed away in his boat meditatively. The Gladstone bag was hard to understand, but it certainly seemed less extraordinary when considered in the attractive light of a possible reward. It became more approximate to those pleasing mysteries with which a benevolent and inexpensive Press entertains an appreciative public, such as the burial of a bag of gold or the mislaying of a lady-journalist; of those things Martin had kept himself informed even though, being a man of small leisure, he had not been able to dig for the one or hunt for the other in Ealing. Accordingly he considered the Gladstone bag more favourably than heretofore, and determined, if possible, to ask his master a few discreet questions.

Charles remained behind on his stump deep in thought, wondering whether he should again try to precipitate a crisis in the affairs of the house-boat or no, and also considering if he still had the power to do so. It had not escaped him that of late his occasional references to his friends in the other camp had been received with considerably less agitation than of old. Talbot, he fancied, had once or twice smiled sardonically, and Majendie and the Admiral had also looked at him in a curious manner. These things had made Charles a little uneasy, for he began to suspect that they knew more than he supposed, and he was now doubtful if he could again raise the cry of *Wolf* with much effect. Moreover a certain physical change had taken place in him; by dint of his arduous daily occupation he was feeling extremely healthy, and two miles did not now seem to him the insuperable obstacle that it had seemed a week ago. He felt indeed that he could

walk double the distance without inconvenience, when once he had discovered his property ; and then he could return Mr. Lauriston's call, and ultimately enjoy all the sweets of revenge. This train of reflection lasted all the morning, and only after lunch did Charles decide that he would not take any steps at present. His friends need never know that the other camp had ever moved up stream at all ; in certain possible eventualities it might be better that they should not have known it. And with this Charles proceeded to wash up with a quiet mind.

Meanwhile Majendie after his rude words to William had made for the boat, and was just pushing off when the Admiral came up and surveyed him with displeasure. "I want that boat," he said in a tone of haughty determination.

"Well, you won't have it," returned Majendie, gloomily satisfied at the Admiral's discomfiture, and he pushed off.

The Admiral's eye shot ineffectual lightning ; instinct told him to dance with rage and hurl maledictions at the Doctor, but instinct is a thing that does not answer in his profession ; calm must always be preserved, for thereon hangs dignity. Besides, Majendie had the upper hand. "Unless you want the other bank as well," he said with frigid politeness, "you might put me across. If it will not be taking you too much out of your way," he added in his sixth-form voice.

Majendie grunted out an ungracious assent. "Hurry up, then," he said as he backed the boat into the bank. The Admiral stepped in and the boat moved across the river in silence.

Majendie got out on the other bank, stuck the boat-hook into the turf and tied the painter to it. The Admiral also got out, and then, one turning to the left and the other to the right, they parted without a word. Both being too much offended with the world and with each other to feel any interest in each other's movements, they did not notice that they were both making, by a somewhat circuitous route, for the same stile in the hedge furthest away from the river.

Here it may not be amiss to give some clue to the offence under which they conceived themselves to labour. Each had that morning had what he chose to consider an appointment ; at any rate each had got into the habit of meeting a certain person at a certain place at a certain hour ; and each had that morning been disappointed, for the certain person was not there. Nor did the person come, though each waited for some considerable

time. This period of waiting had naturally been spent in a review of the situation, with the result that each began to consider himself a very ill-used man. Before, the abstract idea of the certain person's non-arrival might have seemed a trivial circumstance, to be passed over without regret as a slight occasion for surprise ; but in the event it assumed more importance and became a matter first for surprise, then regret, and lastly, something approaching consternation, a process which only shows how a habit will take hold of one before one realises that one has formed it. It was this consternation that had remained, and had been taken for ill-temper by William, and it was this consternation that had brought them across the river, and was leading them to the stile. In a word they were both bent on finding out if possible why the certain person had not come to the trysting-place, and where she was, and all about her, all, that is, that could be ascertained by the means at their disposal, which were few. To begin with, they proposed to get as near to the other camp as they could and to reconnoitre ; and thus they met again unexpectedly at the stile.

"After you," said the Admiral, still much offended.

"Not at all," Majendie returned in a tone which showed clearly that he did not choose to be beholden to the other even in so small a matter. And for some time they stood in silence looking contemptuously at the stile as though it was not worth crossing. At last it occurred to them both simultaneously that the situation was rather ridiculous, and they both moved at the same moment. Fortunately the stile was broad, and as having once moved neither would give way, they got over it together.

It then became apparent that they were going the same way. The footpath led straight across the meadow to a plank bridge which spanned the back-water, here an inconsiderable brook, though nearer the river, where the camp was, it broadened out. It was worthy of notice that neither deigned to set foot on the path itself ; they preferred to stalk along two yards on either side of it. When they reached the bridge it was plain that they had also reached a crisis, for hereon two men could not walk abreast.

Then it was that Majendie became magnanimous. "This is absurd," he said.

"It is," agreed the Admiral, willingly enough.

"William rubs one the wrong way sometimes," Majendie confessed apologetically.

"He does," said the Admiral with feeling.

"After you, old man," continued Majendie, making amends.

"My dear chap," protested the Admiral, but he was constrained to cross the bridge. He waited in renewed friendship for the Doctor to catch him up, reflecting that Majendie was a downright good fellow at bottom. Majendie on the other hand thought, as he followed across the plank, that a man might do much worse than consult the Admiral on a knotty point, for he had a quick judgment and, for all his magisterial moments, a fund of pleasant sympathy.

"Are you going anywhere in particular?" he asked as he reached him.

"Only strolling round," said the Admiral. "I half expected to meet a man," he added for no very clear reason.

"So did I," replied Majendie fraternally. Then a dire misgiving seized him suddenly. What if the Admiral—— "What colour are your man's eyes?" he demanded in abrupt anxiety.

The misgiving was communicated to the Admiral also, and he could not answer. "What colour are yours?" he returned hastily, with a disregard of grammar that he would have gravely censured in one of his pupils.

The suspense was too great. Majendie gave way. "Black," he said, watching his friend's expression eagerly.

The lines of the Admiral's face relaxed and he positively beamed. "Oh, that's all right," he said, "mine are grey or blue, I'm not sure which,—they change so with the light. Anyhow, they're not black."

Majendie pointed interrogatively in the direction of the now deserted camping-ground, which was hidden behind the trees. The Admiral nodded, and then they both laughed very loud and long. When they had somewhat recovered they told their respective tales. "And as I can't understand why she didn't turn up, I was going to spy out the land," concluded Majendie.

"So was I," said the Admiral. And they agreed to reconnoitre in company, setting out in the direction indicated, and amicably exchanging symptoms.

"What would Talbot say?" suddenly exclaimed Majendie, feeling uncomfortable.

"What *wouldn't* he say?" the Admiral agreed. "But he needn't know, if we manage properly. He's not the sort of man to take into one's confidence,—doesn't understand these things."

"He's a bear," Majendie opined.

"Not fit for ladies' society," the Admiral chimed in. "It'll be a score off Charles too." This thought kept them merry until they reached the little copse that cut them off from the camping-ground. Then they proceeded with great caution, making their way noiselessly among the trees until they came to the other side. The Admiral was a little ahead and Majendie was startled to hear a loud exclamation from him when he emerged from the copse. Flinging caution to the winds he hurried across the last few yards, and together they surveyed with blank faces the spot where the tents had so lately been.

While these things were taking place Talbot was walking along the river bank towards the mill in an extremely cynical frame of mind. It was not so much that his opinion of the sex in general had altered, but that the exception, the one bright exception, had proved herself no more constant than the others. Since the gloomy lunch by the house-boat his movements had been erratic, or would have seemed so to anyone not acquainted with their underlying purpose. After that depressing meal he had re-visited the haystack and then the field containing the scarecrow, and had specially reconnoitred a favourite feeding-ground of perch and chub. But his thoughts were not concerned with perch and chub, nor even with Gladstone bags, an equally engrossing subject. She was not there, and had not been there that day.

Talbot was disappointed; he was also indignant. A promise had been made, and according to his ideas promises were things to be kept, especially when made to him. Was it for this, he asked himself, that he had been daily, at much personal sacrifice, getting the brown boots of the magnificent Charles into a shape suited to a foot of reasonable proportions? Was it for this that he had been at pains to make that ingrate's too neat suit presentable by removing its obnoxious appearance of newness? Was it for this,—but women were all alike, and the one consoling feature about the situation was that this afternoon he had not tarried by the haystack longer than was necessary to make up his mind not to endure discomfort twice in one day. Even then he had a presentiment that Cicely would not come.

While he had begun to revolve the aphorisms of the ungallant sages of old touching the indispensable sex, he suddenly remembered that he had promised William to procure eggs and bacon from the village, a promise that providence evidently meant

him to keep, and he left the field with the scarecrow in it, reflecting on the comparative values of truth in its different manifestations. The outcome of his meditations was that men always kept their promise, and women never, and the outcome of this was, again, that women are all alike. This statement, in the male mouth, has seldom been uttered in any true spirit of chivalry. Cicely was a woman after all ; and this again, strange to say, was not intended as a compliment. She probably played hockey,—a palpably unjust accusation which immediately recoiled on the accuser. No, she was after all a woman,—the same conclusion, but with a difference. But why ?

Talbot ceased to try and reason ; the hypothesis, that she was a woman, seemed to answer the question. All the paths of logic and philosophy started from that inevitable hypothesis and led round in a circle to that insufficient conclusion. So he availed himself of the male prerogative and abandoned his mind to indignation. This was the third time that she had failed him, and Talbot was not a patient man. Cicely was manifestly a flirt ; but if she thought she could play with him—Talbot left his reflection grimly unfinished. No, he would have no more of it. She should not find him a tame lap-dog to be whistled to her every whim. He would begin to fish again seriously, and take no further thought of women. Then with human inconsistency he began to think of her more than ever, albeit with bitterness. *This* was the girl whom he had initiated into the mysteries of angling. *This* was the girl for whom he had played traitor to his convictions, this fickle—Talbot's heart overflowed with indignation. However, come what might, he would think of her no more.

Thus resolved he mounted the hill to the farm and demanded eggs in an alarming voice ; then he went on to the village shop and savagely enquired about bacon. The obvious terror and mistrust with which he was regarded in both places appeased him a little,—it is always soothing to communicate suffering—and he descended again towards the mill resolved to fish stoically for chub for the rest of the afternoon. Fish, he meditated, have this great advantage over women. If you catch a very large one you can get it stuffed and put in a glass case, with a moral certainty that your neighbour cannot show a finer one. But with a wife it is otherwise ; she is not worth stuffing, for almost any of your neighbours can produce one that is larger and finer in every

way. He was just extracting the last iota of consolation from this train of argument when he turned round a bush and saw, sitting with her rug and cushions, the rod, basket, and, strange to say, the worm-tin (at some little distance), the inconstant Cicely, her head bent pensively over one hand, and her whole attitude suggestive of graceful melancholy.

CHAPTER XXI

TALBOT, approaching with the caution of an angler, had made no sound, and thus for a minute he was able to meditate on his discovery without betraying his presence. A minute is not a long period, but to an active mind it gives adequate time for the re-adjustment of ideas, and Talbot, as he watched her, found it long enough to wipe from the slate of memory the various reflections and determinations that had been inscribed thereon earlier in the day. They were now clearly no longer necessary. Having decided this point he spoke. "History repeats itself."

Cicely started as he stepped down the bank and made her a low bow, in which chivalrous inclination lurked a certain irony. But she was only conscious of two things; that Talbot had come, and that she was blushing. The first was gratifying, the second disconcerting, but both afforded him unmixed satisfaction. "I thought I should find you here," he began mendaciously.

"Indeed?" said Cicely with a touch of haughtiness. "And pray, why?"

"So keen an angler——" He smiled in return.

"I came here because I wanted to be quiet," she answered with chilling composure. Talbot looked at her unabashed. Cicely leaned back against the tree-trunk among her cushions, and bending her head seemed only concerned with picking out a particularly desirable greengage. This done she glanced up under the brim of her hat, to discover that he was still looking at her. Despite herself she coloured again, though it was what she had expected.

"Cicely," began Talbot, with sudden seriousness. It was the first time he had called her so to herself, and the realisation of this checked him momentarily.

"You were going to say something, Mr. Talbot?" she enquired very politely.

Talbot made certain postponements. "I was going to ask if you wanted to be *very* quiet," he said.

"Didn't I say so?" Cicely was judicial.

"Then in that case I'll be very quiet too," said Talbot cheerfully.

"That's not taking a hint, is it?" Cicely suggested.

"It's not so bad as not keeping a promise," he replied.

Cicely condescended to meet this attack. "One can't always keep a promise, you know."

"And one can't always take a hint," was his ready retort.

"Oh, but that's confessing yourself very stupid," she decided.

"Not if one doesn't want to take it." Talbot sat down firmly.

"Worse and worse!" Cicely's hat suggested a shake of a pretty head. "I've a good mind to command you, sir."

"And this is the best perch-hole in the river," he pleaded.

"I thought you said the one by the scarecrow was the best."

"Next best perhaps."

"No, you said it was the best; you said so yesterday."

"This isn't yesterday," he retorted. "Shall I have to teach you the difference?"

"I didn't come here to be taught," she protested. "You always want to teach us things. If it isn't fishing it's sketching perhaps." She looked at him with exaggerated innocence.

"Has anyone been teaching you sketching?" Talbot demanded in a tone of startling ferocity.

Cicely smiled a far-away smile. "Haven't you a friend who is very good-looking with nice curly hair, who speaks always very precisely and clearly, and has such a pleasant smile and is a schoolmaster and fond of children?"

Parts of this description seemed to apply to the Admiral. "I should never have called him good-looking," Talbot stated with evident conviction and unabated ferocity.

Cicely's smile became more pensive than ever. He was really delightfully jealous, and he deserved a little punishment. "Oh, don't you think so? Any girl would," she averred.

"Women have no taste," said Talbot, forgetting in his indignation that a libel is the greater for publishing a great truth.

"If you can't take a hint, Mr. Talbot," said Cicely sternly, "I can take my departure."

"I beg your pardon," he said hastily; "I didn't think what I was saying."

"That makes it all the worse," said Cicely gravely.

"I really——" Talbot was nonplussed.

"When people speak without thinking they always say what they do think," Cicely pronounced with authority. "Mrs. Lauriston is my aunt," she appended to his bewilderment.

"Well, I know I oughtn't to have said it," he conceded.

"But you do think it?" she insisted. Talbot was silent, so she let it rest there. "You don't like Mr. Crichton, I'm afraid," she pursued.

Talbot heroically paid his debt to friendship. "The Admiral, Crichton I mean, is one of the best fellows I know. If I had a sister,—but I shouldn't have called him good-looking," he concluded, and collected his belongings as if preparing to rise.

"That's because you're a man," said Cicely, smiling at him a little mischievously. But his face was so grave that she felt some slight compunction.

"Good-bye, Miss Neave." He stood up suddenly.

"You've not done much fishing to-day," she said artlessly.

"I should not have intruded," he returned. "I am spoiling your view for sketching."

"Sketching?" repeated Cicely in surprise. "I never sketch."

"But you said——"

"I never said I did, and I never do."

Talbot looked at her; she was delightfully provoking, but he thought he began to see a little. He sat down to see better. "I may fish then?" he enquired. "It's my hole, you know."

"I was the first discoverer," said Cicely, looking with pride at Martin's rod which was leaning idly against a tree.

Talbot put out his hand and grasped the rod. "But I caught the first fish," he said.

"I hooked it," Cicely averred.

Talbot smiled. "Well, it's our hole at any rate." He stretched out his other hand and seized the worm-tin and proceeded to bait Martin's hook. Cicely was so impressed by the horrid fact that the worm-tin was now open that she allowed the joint ownership of the perch-hole to pass unchallenged. Perhaps the idea was not displeasing to either, for they were silent until the worm had been consigned to the depths.

But in a few minutes Talbot began to puzzle out the subject of dispute, and his perplexed countenance induced her to begin with a suggestive, "Well?"

"If you don't sketch," he said slowly.

"I don't *really* fish," teased Cicely. The rod jerked up viciously though there had been no bite. She caught a glimpse of Talbot's face and it frightened her. "But I know who does really sketch," she hastened to add. Talbot seemed still unappeased, so she made a further concession—"and to whom he gives lessons."

"You have met him then?"

"No, never." Truth was a necessity at this moment, but Cicely always rebelled against necessity. "How inquisitive you're getting," she said. "I thought men were not supposed to be curious."

"An intelligent interest in matters that concern oneself is hardly curiosity," Talbot observed loftily.

"Indeed," she pursued. "And how do Mr. Crichton's sketching lessons——"

"He is one of my most intimate friends," he returned.

Cicely made a little nod of acknowledgment; he had marked a point. "I'm sure he'd be very grateful for your intelligent interest," she hazarded.

Talbot ignored this. "Didn't you say your friend Miss Yonge sketched?" he asked.

"She paints very well," Cicely corrected him.

"But is not quite beyond a little help?"

"I don't think I ought to tell you any more." Cicely was demure.

"She knows you fish though?" he suggested in some anxiety.

"She doesn't know I don't really fish." Cicely was conscious of a distinction.

"Ah!" Talbot was relieved.

"Now you mustn't tease him about sketching," she decreed.

"Could I be guilty of such baseness?" he exclaimed in his most noble tones.

Cicely pursed up her mouth. "It wouldn't be fair," she said.

"You've not been fair, I see."

"I don't," Cicely asserted stoutly.

"You've not been keeping Miss Yonge's secrets, and she thinks you are a genuine angler."

"If people can't keep their own secrets," she said dispassionately, "I can't keep them for them."

"Very just," Talbot agreed. He was pleased to find he was safe from the Admiral.

Cicely thought he required another frightening; he looked too self-assured. "He was very gallant, I believe,—Mr. Crichton I mean—but I know someone much braver," she said.

Talbot looked at her quickly. A man ought to sympathise with valour, but her air of enthusiasm was not communicated in its entirety. "Oh," was all his comment.

Cicely was not to be put off. "What would you do if you met a mad cow?" she demanded.

"A mad cow? Do you mean a mad bull?"

"Well, it's all the same." Cicely was not to be vexed with minutiae. "But what would you do?"

"It depends on circumstances," he returned cautiously.

"That means you'd run away," she said in some scorn.

"One is not Sandow," Talbot conceded; but he surveyed himself without any notable dissatisfaction. Regarding himself as of average size he was accustomed to remark on the smallness of most men.

Cicely, however, thought that one's not being Sandow was not in itself an excuse. "He didn't," she declared. "He made the mad bull run away instead; he is a really brave man."

"It couldn't have been very mad," Talbot decided.

"It was; it had eaten a whole packet of mustard. I call it very brave."

"So do I," Talbot agreed. "It deserves a medal. Even Sandow wouldn't eat a whole packet of mustard." Cicely attempted disdain, without much success. "I quite understand," he pursued calmly.

Cicely was aware that her bolt had missed its mark. "Did he tell you?" she asked with obvious disappointment.

Talbot enjoyed his accidental advantage and took a small revenge. "We leave that to the ladies," he answered.

"I think you require another hint, Mr. Talbot," said Cicely, falling back on her impregnable position.

Talbot, however, retorted with the *argumentum ad feminam*. "After I came all this long way to see you?" he protested.

"Did you really do that?" She appeared to relent.

"With what other object could I be accused of coming?"

"I don't think that's quite truthful," she deliberated.

"I never pretended there was anyone else," he began in sudden heat.

"Are you sure it wasn't for perch or chub or fish of some sort?" She passed by his rebuke and looked at his attire with a discriminating eye. Talbot suddenly, and for the first time, remembered that he had not after all had recourse to the Gladstone bag.

"I did come for that, all the same," he said slowly.

"For the fish?"

"Because you had been here, and because you might come here again. And you came?" he ended with a question.

"You are forgiven," she said with dignity.

Talbot bowed. "I have some small matters to forgive too," he insinuated.

"That's usurping our privilege," Cicely declared. "Men never have anything to forgive. If they have, it's their own fault."

"Was it my fault you weren't fishing this morning?" he asked submissively.

"No, but it was Mr. —, the Admiral, I think you call him. Why do you call him that?"

"What else could one call him?" Talbot was too surprised to devote much attention to the question. "How was it his fault?"

"Intelligent interest again?" asked Cicely cruelly. She resented the insufficient answer.

"What a dreadful memory?" he said in mock reproach.

"Why not?" she replied. "It sounds so nice. I'll never talk of curiosity any more."

"So that is always to be remembered against me. How long will you remember fishing?"

"That depends upon circumstances." She quoted him again.

"Napoleon," said Talbot, trying to look Napoleonic, "created circumstances."

"Oh, dear!" Cicely sighed. "I thought I should be taught something soon."

He decided that it might be unwise to create circumstances just then, but determined to reserve the right for the future. "I'll promise to teach you nothing but fishing. Only you mustn't learn anything else."

"That's easily promised," agreed Cicely. "Learning isn't being taught, is it?"

"I'm afraid you do sometimes promise rather easily." Talbot was injured.

"Still thinking of this morning?"

"It's only fair you should teach me a little sometimes. I want to learn all about it."

"Because what concerns your friend concerns you, I suppose," she said.

"Partly."

"You are making reservations," she objected.

"In which I am in good company," he pointed out.

Cicely nodded. "The Admiral—why do you call him that?"

"You are not to learn anything but fishing," he reminded her.

"You don't deserve to hear any more," she said.

"I am all attention."

"Well," Cicely began, "your friend managed very nicely the first time, but Aunt Charlotte saw him the second. That was yesterday, and we nearly went back to town; she thought all kinds of things."

Past dangers awoke no thrill in Talbot at this moment.

"Would you have been very much distressed?" he asked.

"Uncle Henry would have been in such a bad temper," she admitted.

"Only Uncle Henry?"

"That's not quite right, is it?" Cicely reproved him. "You shouldn't accuse us like that."

Talbot abandoned the point. "How was the calamity averted—your return, I mean? I was speaking personally. The Admiral would have been so much grieved."

Cicely explained. "I had to tell her how it really happened that they met."

"Or didn't happen," he murmured. Cicely heard, but let it pass. "So you compromised by coming here?" he enquired.

"Yes, she thinks you are all gone, because you are hidden upstream. And she really would have gone," Cicely continued, "if she thought Mr. Crichton was one of your party."

"You must be very clever at telling facts," laughed Talbot.

"I didn't tell her anything that didn't happen," she protested.

"Poor Mrs. Lauriston, is she so very terrible? I don't think you treat her very well."

"She's a very nice aunt," said Cicely, "when she doesn't know things she doesn't like."

"So you've been keeping her very nice, I see. But does the Admiral know you've moved?"

"Doris hasn't sketched again, and she won't go near that church, ever."

Talbot elicited further details of the affair, and of Majendie's heroism which followed in natural sequence. "I understand now why everyone was so dull at lunch," he said.

"Were they? That was very nice of them," Cicely applauded.

"I didn't think it very nice at the time," he confessed; "but, you see, I didn't know myself why, when, or where you had gone. Majendie's all right."

"He can always go to the shop, of course," assented Cicely.

"The church is not the only thing to sketch," suggested Talbot.

"I believe Mr. Crichton said there was a pretty old oak with King Charles in it," she confessed.

"And your friend?"

"She might go, but she wouldn't if she thought——" Cicely paused in some perplexity.

"She needn't think," said Talbot, decisively. "But," he broke out on a sudden thought, "Mr. Lauriston knows Haddon and Smith; I don't see why——"

"Oh, no, no," pleaded Cicely. "You don't know my aunt."

"I shall have to know her some day," he stated. Cicely remembered the greengages. "But it needn't be to-morrow, if it's a good morning for fishing," he concluded.

(To be continued.)

SOME MORE WORDS ABOUT BREAD

SINCE the publication of an article on this subject in the pages of this magazine in November last, much attention has been directed to the question, and correspondence has been received from all parts of the kingdom. The remarkable unanimity that prevails throughout these letters is a proof that a real evil has been unearthed, for, although it was known to the trade, the ordinary public were hopelessly in the dark, and were entirely ignorant of the reasons which made the very white bread indigestive and objectionable.

It is evident that the blame for the present condition of things is not to be laid at the doors of our millers nor of our bakers; many of them condemn what they are producing, and plainly state that as long as the public demand white bread so long shall they produce white flour, while deploring the fact. Even some of the makers of the machinery for grinding, and for that further craze of flour-bleaching by electricity and nitrous acid, admit that it is wrong.

When Tennyson wrote *MAUD* he described what was then prevalent in the country:

Chalk and alum and plaster are sold to the poor for bread,
And the spirit of murder works in the very means of life.

This was done to secure the whiteness of the loaf, any duskiness being then attributed to dirt in the flour. But this evil has, it is believed, passed away, and whiteness is not now attained by the addition of adulterants, but by the abstraction of some of the valuable constituents of the wheat.

Let there be no misapprehension on this point. The desirable bread, that is, a loaf which contains the phosphates and the germ, is still a white bread; but it is not the snow-white anæmic material, which has been emasculated and impoverished by the

abstraction of all ingredients not absolutely white. It is the fine Hungarian flour introduced some thirty years ago that is responsible for all the trouble, and it is almost pathetic to see how the necessity for this snowy-whiteness has incorporated itself into the minds of our millers. If we speak to them about their flour, they do not, as one would have anticipated, dilate upon its nutritious qualities, but they descant upon its beautiful and fine whiteness ; and it is said that, at the various exhibitions at which prizes have been awarded for bread, the test applied is not as to nutritive and palatable qualities, but as to whiteness. At a recent Bakers' Lecture the chairman asked the judges, who were sitting behind him on the platform, whether they had taken into consideration any of the qualities of bread, as to its being nutritive, palatable, and digestible. The answer he received was laughter at the bare idea of such questions being considered, and it is understood that the only tests applied were as to its whiteness, texture, and general appearance, and that not a sample was submitted to the tasting test.

It has been pointed out that when a man eats his bread in the dark, the question of colour is not involved, but that what is required is a thoroughly wholesome and nutritive material, even at the risk of its being a somewhat golden colour.

It is an interesting fact that the evils of roller-grinding were predicted by Mr. Stephen Terry in a letter written to *THE LANCET* so long ago as June 10th, 1882 ; he seems to have been gifted with prescience upon the subject, and he is still bringing his influence to bear in the efforts to recover to the people of these lands the old-fashioned farm-bread of our forefathers. "The second, third and fourth coatings of the grain," he wrote, "contain nitrogenous substances, phosphates, and other salts which are necessary for the formation of bone, teeth and muscle"; and in later communications he has said, that "indigestible food, or food made so by preservatives and cloying bread, is the predisposing cause of appendicitis."

One of the leading Bakers' Journals wrote the other day to the following effect : "Much as we prefer stone-milled flour and the dusky loaf, and we are at one with Mr. Fox in the preference, we fear there is no hope for a return to the old-fashioned flour and bread so long as the public evince no desire to do so." But it is a subject for congratulation that the public *are* beginning to express such a desire, and millers and bakers are now turning

their attention to the increased demand for stone-ground flour. Even children who have once tasted the right material are no longer satisfied with ordinary baker's bread, but ask for that which satisfies them better and is more pleasant to their taste ; and it is an encouraging fact that since the subject has been brought to the notice of the public some of the millers have doubled their trade.

Let it once more, and very briefly, be pointed out what is desired and aimed at,—the rejection of the bran, and the retention in the flour of some of the inner coating of the grain and fine “middlings” together with the germ.

If wheat be ground between stones, all is reduced to powder with the exception of the bran, and whole-meal bread is the result. But whole-meal does not suit most people, and although a bran-mash may be suitable for horses, and bran may be useful for stuffing dolls and pincushions, yet it is not desirable for the majority of people. Therefore let it and the larger proportion of the “middlings” be extracted by one or more sieves or silks ; the remaining powder contains all the other constituents of the wheat, and the old-fashioned farm-bread is obtained.

Some little while ago, at a lecture given on Bread, a loaf which had been made more than a month previously was produced for inspection and tasting by the audience. In outward appearance there was nothing to show it had been baked so long ago. It was hard and crisp on the surface ; but inside it was sweet, moist, and perfectly eatable. Many of those present, including some bakers, submitted it to a critical examination, and unanimously expressed their opinion in its favour. There was no sign of sourness or mouldiness about it, not even of the staleness of white bread ; in fact it had been kept in its excellent condition by the presence and action of the germ which is destroyed in order to procure the white bread.

The remark of a working man who has recently adopted the farmhouse-bread was instructive ; he said that no one in his senses having once tasted it would return to the very white loaf, as the former was far sweeter, more nourishing and satisfying, and that such a loaf would feed more children. Consequently, he feared the bakers would not care for the demand for bread made from stone-ground flour, as it would reduce the bills of their customers. This, however, need not be feared, for although a smaller quan-

tity may be required at a meal it would bring bread much more into request and use.

It is, I believe, no secret that our late Queen was supplied, while in London, with stone-ground flour from a well known Surrey mill ; and, having recently visited that mill, I was much impressed with the care devoted to the preparation of the grain. There is no branch of trade in which greater ingenuity and skill have been employed than in milling, and for the benefit of ordinary readers it may be well to explain what is done. The grain is gathered, maybe in some distant part of the world, by reaping machines and self-binders. These latter tie the sheaves round with iron wire, and this in threshing frequently gets mixed up with the grain. It is then shipped, often in a dirty condition, with a proportion of soil, sand, and stones, and on reaching Great Britain is stored in granaries. These consist generally of vertical bins, and as they are used for all kinds of cereals, it is inevitable that a small quantity of other kinds of grain becomes mixed with the wheat. A merchant, sending in a thousand tons of wheat, finds, when it comes out, that it is short weight by several hundred-weights, in consequence of the dust and dirt having been removed. The result is that he has less weight to sell and to be paid for ; and although the grain is better and worth a higher price for being clean, as a rule he prefers the greater weight, and consequently grain and dust go to the mill mixed together as they arrived.

But now the miller appears on the scene, and he has a number of most ingenious machines, which seem almost to be endowed with human intelligence. In the first place, all such rubbish as bits of rope and string, sticks and straw, are taken out ; in the next, the grain passes over magnets which attract to themselves all the pieces of iron wire, nails, screws, even lumps of iron ; how, one wonders, did such materials ever get in ? The next series of machines carefully pick out and deposit in separate sacks such foreign substances as maize, oats, barley, cockle, beans, peas, etc., by which time the grain consists merely of the desired wheat.

But it has still to be freed from the soil and sand of the prairie, and for this object it is washed in cold or warm water, and afterwards dried by means of hot air, by which time it is clean and bright and ready to be ground. This is next effected, either by stones or rollers, and here we are at the parting of the ways.

If stones are used, the resulting bran is removed by the first sieves, and if a fine flour be desired, it is passed through other sieves, but the germ having been disintegrated, remains to the greater extent in the flour, and the yield from good English wheat varies from seventy to seventy-five per cent. If rollers are employed, the bran is removed during the whole process of gradual reduction, and the germ which has not been disintegrated but rolled out flat, is taken out by sieves. The material which is separated is termed by millers *offal*, which is a wrongly applied word, and one much to be regretted, as it conveys to the minds of people exactly the converse of the fact. According to the dictionaries, *offal* means, "the rejected or waste parts of a slaughtered animal, a dead body, carrion, that which is thrown away as worthless or unfit for use, refuse, rubbish." So far from this being the case with that which is abstracted from flour, it constitutes the richest, the most valuable, and most nutritious portion of the grain. Then, by additional grindings and siftings, the superfine white flour is produced. It contains less percentage of the original wheat (probably sixty-eight to seventy-two), requires more costly machinery and more elaborate processes, and when finished is a more expensive and less desirable product.

The Americans show their wisdom by shipping flour to this country in place of wheat, for by so doing they retain the bran, germ, and phosphates in their own country for the feeding of their cattle and other purposes; and they sell to us the comparatively innutritious white flour, to our injury in many ways and to their own enormous profit.

It is far better for us as a nation to receive only wheat and to grind it ourselves; by this course, what may be called the by-products of flour are secured for our own use; but still better, and far better, would it be if we could grow our own wheat and bring back the agricultural labourer to the fields, thus in some degree assisting to solve the vexed question of the unemployed.

The late Sir Arthur Cotton, of Indian fame, wrote a pamphlet on the cultivation of wheat in this country, and advocated deep tillage, wherever the character of the soil permitted it. He states that the yield of wheat per acre, which at present is thirty-two bushels, could be increased to 160 bushels; and in some of his experiments he had obtained as many as 6,000 grains of wheat from a single seed. If his facts and figures be correct, they would go a long way towards enabling the greater quantity of

wheat required by the nation to be grown within the borders of our own country.

In conclusion, it is only fair to point out that it is claimed by roller-millers that they can produce the right kind of flour by their mills, should the public demand it. If it be true, it of course matters not whether stones or rollers are used. All we ask is that they should abandon the manufacture of white flour, that they should adopt low grinding, extracting all dirt, leaving in the flour all the ingredients essential to the formation of bone, teeth, and muscle, and to the general health and stamina of the nation.

It is perhaps desirable to state that having no pecuniary interest in flour or wheat, nor in any milling enterprise, this article has been written solely in the interest of the community, and especially of the rising generation.

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THE ARRESTED STROKE

I

FIRE and darkness and clamour,—the fire of forges, the darkness of smoky roof and rafters, the high clamour of iron ringing on iron, and the strokes of furious sledges smiting the red-hot metal with dulled blows. Loud hissings are heard as glowing masses are plunged into water, and the water itself rises in voluminous billows of steam, as though they were the ghosts of the iron shapes that have grown cold and dead. The steam is the only thing here that is white, and that soon fades away. All is strange, unnatural, Plutonic. Flitting shadows come and go; flames leap forth, as though from some huge dragon's jaws, and as suddenly die away, leaving floating blots of deepest blackness where the blaze had been. The eye swims in these obscurities and is oppressed by the unexpected assaults of intense radiance; the ear is deafened by the vast volume of percussive sound. On the sandy floor of the place dusky figures dart about; sudden bursts of fire gleam on their grimy faces and naked red arms, red as the fire. These figures toil and strain; they carry great weights and shift tremendous bulks; they swing swift hammers, and deftly play with coruscating, metallic liquescences, hissing white. Sparks fly like tiny meteors through the gloom: bellows breathe and belch; and amid all this uproar one hears the voices of men,—of men or of demons, or of beings of the race of Cyclops? Can it be that this is Vulcan's infernal stithy deep in the bowels of *Ætna* and that these are his swarthy journeymen, forging invincible arms and armour for shining Olympian gods or earthly heroes? So might it seem to one who from a point of detachment and isolation beholds this spot, this region of gloom and lurid light, so strangely out of time and out of place. But the sallow light

that lies inert upon the dingy glass of the roof falls down from England's skies. This is the interior of an iron-works in the black country of the Midlands forty-five years ago, not differing greatly from similar places of to-day ; and though their aspect is the aspect of demons, the voices of these workers are the voices of men.

"That will do, Tom," says smith James Cordell, to his apprentice, a powerful young Titan, half-naked, who, with tremendous blows of a heavy hammer, had welded together the two parts of a long rod which Cordell had been turning on the anvil with a pair of great tongs. The apprentice pauses with uplifted sledge, a splendid figure ; the powerful torso with its quivering masses of muscle gleams like some masterpiece in bronze, relieved by the furnace-glare against the background of sombre confusion ; the sledge at his master's command descends no more upon the iron, but sinks slowly to the ground.

James Cordell inspects the weld of the long rod ; to him it seems perfect, and it is then taken by two other men towards a great crescent-shaped skeleton of iron rib-work which shows dimly through the dusk at the farther end of this huge shed. It is a roof-truss for a railway station ; the rod is the all-important tie-rod which holds the whole together,—the cord of the arc, the string which gives the bow its strength. Perfect from the outside appears the juncture in that rod, a perfect marriage and close bond of overlapping iron fibres. But deep down in its heart are divorce and dissension between the unintermingled molecules. They still await the consummating blow that shall force and bind them together in the fervency of fire. The blow does not fall ; they cool, and, though outwardly all is well, yet inwardly the molecules have undergone no interfusion. There is, as technically expressed, no union in the weld.

So it was that this uncompleted hammer-stroke, arrested in air by command of James Cordell, fell not then, but far-off in the future after five and forty years,—fell like the scythe of Death and slew six men. For the Fates and the Powers and the Destinies that plan their purposes and weave and interweave deep into the current of life their intricate and complicated plots, so ordered it that the seemingly innocent hand of James Cordell, since then mere dust in the grave, should reach forth out of the past and its shadows, and pluck away the lives of six human beings who in his time were still unborn and who knew not, while they lived,

that their end had been written for them, in the unrealised hammer-stroke in that dark stithy of destiny and doom, forty-five years before.

II

High into the air the roof-truss with its guilty rod arose, and there, for many years, at Charing Cross, it upheld the colossal span of glass and iron which vaulted from wall to wall. It was the first truss, the first from the open end of the famous station, and it faced the river. Day after day, through those many years, the unintermittent trains sped in and out, and myriads of human beings came and went, from and to all the regions of earth, and every morning thousands of toilers in the metropolis streamed in darkly from their homes, and at night, like an ebbing tide, they flowed back again to loving hearts and household cheer. Life, like a great river, ran beneath this huge shell upborne so high by the stiff and stubborn trusses, and through all the hours the tumult of humanity surged to and fro. It seemed as if all had been thus forever, and thus would forever remain, knowing no change. The dusty steel crescents hung in air like gigantic spiders' webs, still and patient and motionless, expanding a little with the summer's heat, contracting a little with the winter's cold. It was their duty, they thought, to be fixed there eternally passive, changeless, and still.

Their bright, swift brethren, polished metal monsters of fire and steam, roared and thundered below, groaning, shrieking, heaving, and puffing, drawing long and heavy trains like great serpents to and fro and always vanishing somewhere beyond the river, whence they afterwards returned again. They, too, were kindred of iron, and it was their duty to pull and puff and roar, as it was that of the iron trusses to lie in calm and uncomplaining repose. The robust, turbulent animalisms of wheels belched up from their wide, black throats great clouds of sulphurous smoke and snowy steam. The acid of the fumes clung to the iron; the steam congealed in millions of microscopic gems. The fog came, too, and the river-mists like sheeted apparitions, and breathed upon the stays and rods of the trusses, but most upon that one which stood first of their number. Their damp breath brought a rust, and the rust gnawed hungrily into the iron, as

the rust of age into the bones of the bodies of men. The silent, gray dust that sheathes and clothes all things, spread its films upon the metal ribs, hiding the rust that was red as blood beneath.

In the microcosm that existed in the imperfect joint of the enfeebled tie-rod, the faithful, adherent molecules were ill-content. From without, their enemy rust devoured them remorselessly and without cessation; from within, the rift that lay between the unwelded laps of metal, widened and tore into their crowded ranks. In that little community ensued dreadful cataclysms, enormous shocks, upheavals and avalanches of dead or disintegrating particles, minute, atomic, imperceptible to man, but in that infinitesimal world corresponding to the most stupendous convulsions in our own. Little knew the busy, struggling human world below, of the titanic, elemental war being waged high above its head; it knew nothing of the struggle until, in its finality, it shook all England and echoed across the continents. It was like some great unuttered thought nursed in some small human skull until it is loosed in a thunder-blaze upon astonished mankind.

The spinning Fates who sit in darkness, shooting their swift shuttles to and fro, had gathered the life-threads of six men into their hands and tied them to the fatal rod. All circumstances, inclinations, influences, and impulses connected with the lives of these fated six, and of those whose lives were most closely interwoven with theirs, had conspired and inevitably led to this. Nothing was lacking in this development; the mystic net-work, inter-responsive as a delicate system of nerves, throbbed with impending doom. In proportion as the rod grew weaker, the faithful molecules slowly surrendering to their death in rust or to the ruptures of the two divisions, the strain grew greater and ever greater. The immense crescent hovered upon the brink of a vast collapse. The strength of the structure, which had borne tons of its own weight and the enormous stress of wind and rain, was at last so delicately balanced that a few additional strains would have crumpled it into a thunderous ruin. Yet it still hung for many days, for many weeks and months above the ceaseless currents of life that swept on so restlessly below. The effects of the hammer-strokes of James Cordell's apprentice had been slowly, as it were, unravelled by the non-effect of the stroke never delivered; their transient

utility had been undone. The hammer-stroke of Death in a parallax with Destiny was yet to fall.

One December morning, when the skies were very gray and sad, many men came to their labour at Charing Cross. Some were there to paint the metal-work in the great arches of the glass roof ; others were occupied in an adjoining theatre. Among them were the six whose warm, human lives were bound up with the life of the cold, inanimate and weary tie-rod of the overloaded truss. Others there were, too, who in the unsuspected, looming battle between animal and mineral bodies, were to emerge with life left to them, but wounded or maimed. In such wise had the distribution of these tragic doles been predetermined. The unconjectured conspiracy of dumb and malignant matter was complete. Slowly, yet ceaselessly, invasion into the domain of the uncorrupted molecules had been advancing, until now their combined strength in the joint of the rod was exactly equal to the weight of the truss. When, suddenly and without warning, the splendid marble campanile of St. Mark's at Venice, a structure that had stood beautiful and strong through the ages, fell like a fainting woman into a heap upon the sunny piazza, men wondered and deemed it strange. They did not take into account this unalterable truth,—that surely the patience of lifeless bodies passes away and the seemingly undiminishing strength that depends upon the negative resistance of ponderable things. A subsidence in the foundations, men said, brought low the Venetian bell-tower ; that was, perhaps, the direct cause, but neither the first nor the deepest. Men forgot that machines and structures, as though they were sentient beings, grow weary and work or stand no more.

Men mounted upon the airy, yet massive, glass shell of Charing Cross station. Throughout the hours of the day they laboured at their tasks, and the day was almost done. Three of the men fore-ordained to share the destruction of the fabric were upon the roof directly over the fatal truss ; they were joined by a fourth. The added weight of this man was to the truss as the proverbial straw to the camel's back. It was like the added feather that tips the beam of a delicate balance. Such a balance, it might be conceived, was held by Fate. On one side the six human lives shot swiftly downwards into darkness and demolition, while in the other and empty scale the lacking hammer-stroke that had been stayed by James Cordell ere it fell upon the

welded rod in the iron works five and forty years before, soared upward as swiftly. It had fallen, dead and useless, into the balance of Fate.

The station for a brief space was silent and empty. No trains departed and none arrived. The iron coursers stood still in their trappings of brass, breathing with composure. Destiny, in kindly mood, had chosen such a moment, as with an unwillingness to sacrifice more than the six lives whose threads had turned to chains and fettered them to this doom. Two of these life-flames were burning brightly, aglow with vigour, in the adjacent theatre, predestined victims of a tragedy more realistic than was ever to be simulated there. When the fourth man had ascended the roof over the truss, the molecules in the joint of the tie-rod could bear no more. They were torn swiftly asunder, and reluctantly the two separated sections of the rod fell far apart.

III

Safely had I passed through the constant perils of the rail in vast new continents, safely made the winter-passages of storm-swept oceans, had emerged unscathed from the thousand possibilities of disaster that infest the path of the traveller, and now, after a tour through all the countries of the Continent, found myself safe and sound in this world-metropolis. On that day in the early part of December it chanced that I awaited a friend from Canterbury and that I entered Charing Cross station somewhat earlier than the time the train was to have arrived. Not being certain of this time, I looked for some official to give me the required information. Few employes were about and few travellers; the station seemed full of a strange and intermittent lull, which, now that I recall it, seems to me to have been instinct with some sense of impending disaster, some looming, portentous imminence, solemn with the hush of significant awe, such as I had often experienced in California when a suppression of all life and motion lies in the torpid air before the coming of the earthquake.

The vast gray void of the station was haunted by this unaccustomed silence and gloom; a wan, sickly light filtered through the great span of murky glass overarching the gleaming tracks and

empty trains. At the open end of the building the melancholy skies sent in a flood of cold and ashen light. Through the temporarily unguarded gates that led to the platforms I espied one of the ticket-collectors at the forward end of a train. Passing through the barrier, I approached him, when there came a sharp and swift report, and two great lengths of an iron rod swung up and down, high in air, at the open end of the station. Then followed a violent sound of creaking and rending, a crackling of dislocated metal, glass, and wood; the great crescent trembled terribly and swayed as with dizziness. Instantly, with the oceanic roar of some gigantic, ice-bound Niagara breaking loose, with hollow and resonant thunder-bursts and deafening salvos of wild artillery, the light was blotted out from the face of things and some vast curtain or eclipse passed between the outer and inner day, bringing a sudden dusk. The platform shook from the impact of immense and formidable masses, and through my ears, unequal to the volume of the uproar, this thought was, for a brief instant, translated to the brain: all the locomotives in the place have blown up at once! Crash succeeded crash; the dreadful din and the thick dust struggled fiercely for possession of the air.

I found myself again at the barrier dazed, stunned, aghast. Men and women ran madly hither and thither; some had fainted and lay like dead upon the floor. An awful quiet ensued, and the sallow daylight, wallowing through the dust-clouds, showed a great wound of ragged brick walls, of torn and splintered wood and twisted iron, of bristling struts and rods and jagged ends of broken purlins. Below lay a mountain of wreckage, like a confused heap of the slain after a battle. From this, distinctly and fearfully, came groans and smothered cries. It was as if that pitiful, mangled mass of helpless remains, that ruined work of man's cunning contrivance and fruit of science, invention, and industry, in which matter had been subjugated to useful form and end, now suddenly all undone and "cast as rubbish to the void," resolved to aching disorder and abortive chaos, was lamenting with these dread cries the tragedy of its own destruction. The aspect bore in it the heavy grief that invests matter that has lost its meaning, the sorrow that clings to all dead and useless things, due, perhaps, to some Dionysian sense of our corporeal relation to all substance. But to my reassembling senses, dizzied by sound and shock, came the realisation of a greater tragedy. Human cries rang in my ears. I ran forward and noticed what seemed

to be a woman's arm projecting upright from the confused débris, mutely appealing with a spasmodic opening and closing of the fingers to the cold, implacable skies that now looked down so drearily. Only the forearm was visible, and that was covered to the elbow with a long, grey glove. We toiled about that beseeching arm, clearing away many stubborn obstructions, and, at last, from beneath a burthen of mortar, brick, and shattered glass, lifted from its grave of agony a bleeding wreck. It was not a woman ; it was one of the painters who had fallen with the roof. He had worn an old pair of woman's long gloves to protect his arms from the paint. As he was lifted up, a helpless, crumpled mass, and placed in the ready ambulance, rills of blood ran out from under the end of the gloves and wrote some strange red message along the sooty dust.

Two bays of the wide roof had fallen ; the great wind-screen with its innumerable panes of glass lay on the top of the ruin, twisted and dashed to pieces, and across the coaches of the trains, which it had cleft completely in twain, stretched a steel girder of a hundred tons, like some immense Damoclean sword suddenly released from its suspending hair. The roof of the theatre hard by had been demolished, crushed by the avalanche of the collapsing brick wall. I looked aloft ; the imperturbable firmament stared down calmly with a blind and stony massiveness, and all Nature seemed a remote, remorseless, and unchanging thing.

In those depths of distance beyond the mists I knew that the clashing discords of scattered worlds, drifting uncontrollably and at random, were yet, for all that, weaving some universal diaper of cosmic fate as they tore through immensities of time and space. Was this the law, the harmony we claim to recognise in the universe, or but the progression towards some great and ultimate anarchy ? Perhaps all life was anarchy, and necessity the only law or condition. Upon the rod of what had been the truss of the third bay, and was now that of the first, a piece of light board balanced and trembled, marvellously poised. It was as though it were a symbol of the scales of Fate wherein human lives and human works had been weighed and mysteriously found wanting.

To me there came a strange knowledge of how the perpetration of my own death had been thwarted, how, through many years, this moment, this place, this occasion had lain in wait for me who had been approaching it from great distances since the

very day of my birth. Yet, so far as the duration of my own life was concerned, the intricate and long-maturing plot had failed by a few seconds of time, by a few steps of my feet. My death lay farther off; it was not to have been now, but was still to be, in the future years, infallibly, by other means, in another place, at another time, unknown, inscrutable, yet no less sure. Somewhere along the path of those future years, disease, perhaps, lay a-lurk for me in Palermo or Yokohama, or a rattlesnake in the Californian hills, or drowning in the Caspian sea, or a fever in the swamps of Florida, or a draught in the hall of a friend's house, the bullet of some rash amateur huntsman, a railway collision in America or Algeria,—the time would bring the means as the hour brings the man. I would go to meet it from this very moment, and I would find it ready.

Six men were killed in the accident at Charing Cross railway station. At the official investigation by the authorities a famous scientific engineer spoke thus: "The direct cause of the collapse of the roof was due to the imperfect welding of the iron in the joint of the tie-rod. There had been no union of the metal."

HERMAN SCHEFFAUER.

WORK AND WAGES IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

BRITISH COLUMBIA has been frequently advertised as the paradise of the sportsman and of the capitalist, especially of such capitalists as choose to invest in mines. It is not the present writer's business to press either of these contentions. It is true beyond all shadow of doubt that the hunting of big game, of considerable variety, rewarded by as much success as any genuine sportsman should desire, may be indulged in here at much less expense than in most other countries rich in wild animals, and with perfect immunity from malaria and other forms of ill health which spoil the amusement in South Africa, and to a certain extent in India. It is equally true that, now that British Columbia has passed the perilous time of her infancy as a mining country, there are a large number of low-grade mining-properties in the copper districts which can, thanks to the introduction of cheaper methods of treatment and greater facilities for transport, as well as to the early decease of a large portion of our wild-cat speculators, be made to pay men who understand their business and put trust in nobody but themselves. There are silver-lead properties in the Slocan, so rich in value that even the conditions which have prevailed could scarcely prevent their development; and there are undoubtedly bodies of gold gravel in the northern parts of British Columbia, rich perhaps as some of those in Cassiar, of which we skimmed the cream in the Seventies, but certainly rich enough to pay a handsome dividend upon capital judiciously invested in hydraulic operations.

But both capitalist and hunter may go wrong in British Columbia, and both from the same cause. Neither will succeed if he is not prepared to take care of himself. Agents, and all the paraphernalia by which idle men surround and protect themselves from trouble in the older countries, are practically valueless,

I believe, in all colonies. The successes of the colonies are not for infants in arms, but for men who can take care of themselves. Therefore such infants are really of no more good to the new country than they are to themselves. They may fill some individual's pocket, but their failure to fill their own does the country as much harm as it does themselves.

There is one class of man absolutely certain to better his condition by coming to British Columbia. It is the class of man who can and will labour with his hands, and abstain from whiskey and politics. Want of labour and a plethora of politics are the curses of Western Canada. It is almost impossible to find white labour with any experience for farm-work ; and, in spite of the intense prejudice against Chinese, and the recent legislation which, by putting a head-tax of £100 upon Chinamen, has decreased their number and raised their wages, most men are obliged to employ them, although it is generally admitted that Chinamen are of no use with horses, and that three Chinamen will not do more work than two average white men. The Japanese, against whom there is less prejudice and no valid legislation, do not much affect the question of farm-labour. They can work if they like to do so, but they do not like the work and will not stick to it. So soon as the fishing-season comes round, your Japanese will leave you, nor is there any means by which you can contract him out of his liberty to go when he likes. As the fishing-season and the harvest-time here are identical, it is not difficult to understand the disadvantage of employing Japanese labour. There is one other class of labour, the native Indian labour of the country ; but though Indians are excellent clearers of land, and in some cases good axe-men, they do not take kindly to any steady work, and are only useful occasionally in contract labour. Nature is too liberal, and the Indian too easily contented. With his spear and his trolling-line the native can catch all the fish he wants, and round the coast his gun and rifle supply him with as many ducks, deer, and so forth as suffice him for food.

The result of all this is that in the field of farm-labour an English farm-hand would have no class to compete against in British Columbia.

The writer is himself farming not far from the capital, and in two years has not been able to obtain a genuine farm-labourer who can plough and do such other things as most farm-labourers are supposed to do.

¹ The wages paid run from \$20 a month and board of the best, to \$45 without board, for men who are not experts in any sense but simply competent (more frequently incompetent) farm-hands, and the vacancies have to be filled by young English lads of the public-school class, whose will is excellent, but whose knowledge, as a rule, is very much less obvious. Of really cheap labour, the boy's labour of stone-picking, fruit-gathering, tending stock, and such like, we have absolutely none in British Columbia. It all has to be done by adults, and paid for at the rates paid here to grown men. The working woman is an unknown person. It is doubtful whether a couple of dozen female cooks could be found in private houses in the capital of British Columbia, but that there is a demand for them is beyond question. Their wages would range from \$18 a month upwards, and all that would be demanded of them would be such simple skill as produces well-cooked meats and apple-puddings in the old country. The farm-labourer with a wife who would cook for the house, and a couple of small boys who would make themselves useful about a farm, would be a godsend indeed, and might easily earn \$50 a month and their board.

IN THE YEAR BOOK OF BRITISH COLUMBIA, a conscientiously compiled volume of statistics, we may read that—

Chinese are mainly employed throughout the province for farm-labour. They received from \$10 to \$20 a month. Last year a considerable number of white farm-labourers were employed and were paid from \$20 to \$30 a month with board. A large demand exists for skilled milkers, who are paid as high as \$40 a month and board.

This is probably a general statement of averages and as such is no doubt accurate; but I have never been lucky enough to find a Chinese farm-hand who would work at \$10 a month, and at present have to pay my cook and ploughman \$20 a month each and board. Although bitterly opposed to Chinese labour as tending to fill the place of marrying, breeding white men who would form the nucleus of a population worthy of the province, I am obliged to employ them, or do the work of house and farm myself.

The only alternative to a Chinese cook is your own wife. The lady-help is a rank impostor; she is too much *lady* and too little

¹ Throughout this article the dollar may be taken as equivalent to four shillings sterling.

help. She puts her boots outside her door every night and wonders who cleans them ; she can play the piano moderately, but she knows nothing of making butter ; and "the one thing she cannot do" includes all those things which she is wanted to do. As a practical man I say for heaven's sake let her stop at home, unless she comes here expressly to be married ; in which case, if she be good-looking, let her come.

Very nearly the same may be said of the gentleman-labourer. He is an expensive luxury, and although in time he may grow into a first-rate workman, it is better that he should do so at some other man's expense. Farm-pupils, who pay £100 per annum to be taught their business by being worked upon a bush-farm, may put a little money into the employer's pocket if his wife is a good (or mean) housekeeper and he a good slave-driver ; but a pupil who cuts your new harness to pieces to make it fit the wrong team has his drawbacks.

The people we want in this country are the old-fashioned general servants who can cook plainly, wash and scrub, and the farm-labourers who can do any ordinary job upon a mixed farm. For them the outlook is bright enough. At first the man should get his \$18 to \$20 a month and board all the year round ; and in this he would be better off than in many forms of labour in British Columbia which, though better paid, are apt to fail a man for a few months in the winter season. The woman should get about the same.

It is the boast of this province, a boast for which we pay somewhat heavily, that the working man is better treated here than elsewhere. He is too well treated for the prosperity of the province, since the free educational advantages of this country are out of all proportion to its income, and the taxes paid by the working man bear no relation whatever to the advantages he enjoys. Nor, if he be ambitious, is there any limit to the position to which he may climb. In one of the best farming districts of British Columbia, four of the best farms are owned by four brothers who came out as Welsh farm-labourers. Better fellows for the country you could not find, and it is well that one of them is in the local Parliament, the late premier of which was a working miner's son.

One word in addition to people among whom the writer was brought up. They were then, and probably are still, sportsmen every one of them. As a land-owner I called them poachers,

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but if I had not been a land-owner I should have been a poacher myself. Excellent rough shooting and excellent fishing are free here to all ; land, for those who save enough to be able to make a home for themselves, is reasonably cheap and plentiful ; the necessaries of life are cheap, and the world is beginning to realise that the centre of enterprise and development is shifting westwards, and that the small things and small men of the Pacific coast are likely to grow more rapidly into great things and great men in the next fifty years than anywhere else on the world's surface.

A BRITISH COLUMBIAN COLONIST.

THE PRACTICAL ANGLER¹

STEWART'S PRACTICAL ANGLER, which has emerged from a period of oblivion just half a century after its first publication and popularity, will help some of us at least to renew our youth in its once familiar pages. For my own part, when the book fell open at some beautifully reproduced illustrations from Stewart's old patterns, of spiders black and red, grouse and woodcock, time and space were annihilated. I seemed to feel once more the waters of the Whitadder gurgling about my feet, and to hear the Cheviot sheep bleating on the hills around St. Bathans, and the grouse and curlews calling in the solitudes of Cranshaws and Priestlaw. The Whitadder was one of Stewart's many rivers, and he was a king among us,—if two long seasons, from February to October, may entitle the writer of this modest tribute to account himself sealed of the tribe. For what an age is a year or two of youth when one lived and rejoiced in every day of them!

My first impulse was to hunt for an old fly-book that has been with me for over thirty years unused, and for twenty at least unopened. This is not surprising, for in library parlance it would be classified as a medium quarto. In the fishing circles of my youth there was a robust abhorrence of anything finnikin, or, as we called it, cockneyfied, and a prodigious veneration for home-made articles. Indeed the prejudices of some localities in these trifles would be inconceivable to the modern mind. This particular relic is constructed out of some parchment deeds relating to an Exmoor church, lawfully come by in an Exmoor rectory, and no doubt, therefore, intrinsically worthless. It is interleaved, of course, with generous breadths of flannel, and filled with compartments in the parchment of all shapes and

¹ THE PRACTICAL ANGLER; by W. C. Stewart (with an introduction by W. Earl Hodgson). London, 1905.

sizes, for the storing of flies, casts, silk, fur, feathers, loose hooks, scissors, tweezers, and so on ; for most of us made part at any rate of our own flies. As a schoolboy I was passing proud of the design, which was thought out somewhat carefully, and above all of the result, contributed to by the deft needle and thread of some female relative. It was not, to be sure, altogether original, being inspired, at least, by one that an old gentleman (who taught me to tie flies of a kind) had carried about North Wales from Waterloo to the Crimean War. Nothing but a shooting-pocket would hold it, and it generally travelled in a special compartment of the creel, often, in periods of excitement, actually among the fish. In these days of eye'd flies and neat tin boxes it presents a most uncouth appearance ; even in those it must have had a picturesque and antique flavour, since a weak youth and would-be fisherman from East Anglia, more concerned with the appearances than the realities of sport, used periodically to offer me considerable sums of money for it, honestly affirming it would be the making of his reputation in his own country where there were no trout. It still contains some odds and ends of tackle, moth-eaten flies, rotten gut, the wing of an Exmoor snipe, the ear of an East Lothian hare, feathers from a Peeblesshire blackcock, hackles of barndoor fowls from anywhere. But what I have been trying to arrive at is the discovery in the depths of one of its pockets of a bunch of wonderfully well preserved spiders, patterns and relics of the Stewart period (speaking piscatorially, not historically) and of the rivers he used to fish. What memories an ancient fly-book like this invokes ! though here we are only concerned with those relating to the reign of this angling Stewart, and near the end of it too, for this king of Border fishers died in the winter of 1872. I was in East Lothian at the time and remember hearing much obituary talk and reading long accounts in the Scottish papers of his funeral, which was attended by a goodly following of the craft. He must surely have been regarded as a great man ; for when I found myself, on the only occasion I can remember to have set eyes on him, fishing in the same field, much the same sensations stirred my breast as had swelled it not long previously on being in with W. G. Grace in a provincial cricket-match ; an elation, by the way, somewhat damped by being promptly run out by him.

Stewart's name was certainly one to conjure with, beside the banks of those Eastern Border streams at any rate, while round

the firesides of the little homely fishing-inns his prowess and his opinions were a frequent theme. His entomological scepticism was not seldom combated, particularly by the occasional alien. But how could you stand up against a man who proved his theories by always killing more fish than anybody else, and that too in waters open to the public and frequented by hosts of practised fishermen? Stewart believed that the way in which a fly was put to a trout and put into him was nearly all the battle, so long as the fly was unremarkable, naturally, and, above all, sparingly dressed. Sizes, within reason, and still less shades, he set small store by, except so far as they were adapted to the trout's vision in various states of water. The imitation of the natural insect of the moment, except perhaps a drake, he laughed to scorn; and yet no one killed more fish than he did season after season, and very few so many. Black or red hackles (then and doubtless still known as *spiders* in southern Scotland), dressed very scantily with a plain silk wrapping for body, were his favourites, with two or three winged flies and as many other varieties of hackles. When the March brown was thick on the water he would usually put one on; but he held that any other of his half-dozen stock varieties of the same size was just as serviceable. I have myself often fished through heavy rises of March brown, for which the Welsh Dee is notable, and am forced to own that the orange dun or February red, or whatever the second fly might be, has been sometimes just as effective; though not to have a March brown mounted, and that too of the popular local tying, would require a robustness of faith, or lack of it, that only Stewart perhaps was capable of. It is certainly difficult for any one who once came within Stewart's influence, directly or indirectly, who knew his rivers and was face to face with his methods and their results, ever to recover entirely from the effects of his convincing demonstrations. His English contemporaries, Mr. Francis Francis at the head of them, covered his four or six fly theory with ridicule, just as he in turn scoffed at their redundant entomology. Unfortunately Mr. Francis (whose book was another classic of my youth) interpreted Scotland as the Highlands, as so many Southerners with less excuse still often do, and twitted Mr. Stewart with practising his theories on the unsophisticated troutlings of Highland burns. The latter, who, like many Scotsmen of his, and possibly of this, time, held the ways and even the fish of the Southron in some contempt,

invited his critics to come and fish the Gala water over which an average of thirty rods passed every day. Think of that, ye secretaries of modern fishing-clubs! As a matter of fact practically all the streams of the Scottish Border, certainly the northern tributaries of the Tweed, including much of that famous river itself, were open to the trouting public; and the fishing public of Southern Scotland, even at that time, was a prodigiously large and an extremely enterprising one. Even in 1857 Stewart complains that there were fifty fishermen for one there had been early in the century. He quotes the evidence of an elderly friend that in his youth there were only two men in a long stretch of the Tweed who ever threw a line on it, and that the trout, when in a reasonable mood, would take anything that was put over them, no matter how inartistically presented. I am sure there is not a stretch of river in Great Britain to-day in that elementary condition. Any one, moreover, who has experienced this phenomenon in wild unsettled countries knows how soon it palls, and how quickly the charm of angling vanishes when skill ceases to be a factor. Stewart went so far as to profess a dislike to fishing in preserved waters even in this country, a sentiment I fancy that few anglers nowadays would echo. Five and thirty years ago it was not easy to get away from brother anglers in those regions which were Stewart's favourite fishing-ground, comparatively remote and far from railways though many of their waters were. And yet they still held an amazing lot of fish, if tolerably well educated ones. It must be remembered, too, that the bicycle, that good friend of the modern angler, was then unknown, and it was no uncommon thing for enthusiasts to walk seven or eight miles at the beginning and end of a long day's fishing. I wonder what the modern youth would say to that?

Yet half a century ago we find Stewart lamenting the decrease of trout, but at the same time undertaking to kill twelve pounds' weight with his spider flies on any but the most hopeless days; and I remember those who knew him used to say that he was as good as his word. He lamented, too, as we lament with much greater reason, the rapid running away of flood-water owing to the increase of drainage. What would he say now? For this seems to me the only possible reason to account for a decline of fish that I can vouch for within my memory on streams that have neither been over-fished nor poached. We need not therefore go to the many that have been thus treated and put

down their shrinkage to such causes, as is so often done ; for over-fishing and poaching are no new things. It is a common saying (and I have Wales for the moment in my mind) among the humbler sort of anglers that there were far more trout when poachers worked their will unchecked, and streams were much less preserved by individuals or Associations, than there are now, and it is impossible to deny that there is often absolute truth in this seeming paradox. Some of these simple folk connect the recent deterioration with more stringent laws and preservation, a palpable superstition, of course. But it seems plain enough that if all the bottom food of a river is whirled away to the sea in a day, instead of filtering slowly in for several days, the stock of fish must suffer ; and this leaves out of account any damage done to the breeding-grounds of both flies and fish by such unnatural freshets. Indeed I do not imagine this is disputed ; but I should like to quote in further proof of it the case of the only unpampered river known to me in which the natives admit, or almost admit, that there are as many trout as ever. This is the Cardigan-shire Teifi, "the noble river Teifi," as Giraldus Cambrensis by virtue of its fish styled it seven hundred years ago. Now the Teifi, soon after leaving the mountains and passing by the ruins of Strata Florida Abbey and the village of Pontrhydfendigaiad, enters the great bog of Tregaron, the only real flat Irish bog in England or Wales, and courses through it for many miles. Here the peaty waters are held as in a sponge and let gradually into the river with something of the deliberation of olden times, and for the remaining forty miles of its course both fish and fishermen enjoy to a considerable extent the conditions that existed everywhere in the golden age. In some parts it is flogged to death, in others strictly preserved ; but here you may yet see a fine river retaining both its waters and its normal fecundity without help. Stewart's editor, Mr. Hodgson (an authority of note), is of opinion that his author's pessimism with regard to the future has not been justified, and that on the whole there are as many trout in the country as ever. If one takes the reservoirs and private pools that have been artificially stocked, and all the chalk streams that by the same means and constant care have been brought to the highest point of production, this view, though expressed with reserve by Mr. Hodgson, might be reasonable. Scarcely anyone can get very far outside his own experience in attempting an estimate, but I feel competent to assert without fear of contradic-

tion that almost every river in Wales has declined immensely in the last quarter of a century. The Avon, again, is the best trouting-river in South Devon; the Barle is the chief river of Exmoor; in neither of these could one-half the baskets be taken to-day that were killed there when I was a boy; of this there is not the smallest doubt. The one has been the subject of much interesting evidence: the other I have myself tested abundantly in both periods as boy and man; and these are both most typical waters as well as examples, for no extraneous causes for so great a decline are present except drainage. As for Stewart's country I would venture to say, even without recent experience, that the situation is very similar.

I have a somewhat remarkable journal left to me by a departed friend who hated writing, but who from the time he was sixteen till the week of his death thirty years later, kept a most exact and laborious private record of every day's hunting, shooting, or fishing in a life which largely consisted of these pursuits. Not far from the beginning of this bulky and singular volume, I find it noted (though indeed I remember every circumstance well enough) that on June 5th, 1871, he and I, then hardly out of our teens, after an eighteen mile walk began fishing the much flogged waters of the Whitadder at Ellemford at three o'clock on an afternoon of showers and sunshine. We were back at our inn to dinner most certainly before sunset, and had sixty fish between us including two over a pound weight, large ones for that country. Stewart would easily have taken that number by himself, especially as my friend, though a mighty Nimrod otherwise, was then and ever a poor fisherman. Could a couple of striplings, nay, could Stewart himself, do this much in the Whitadder or any other heavily fished open water to-day? I think not.

But of all the changes in angling fashions the dry-fly cult would most surprise the shade of our author. I sometimes wonder how many of its younger disciples realise that at the date last mentioned it was practically unknown. Having been reared on the banks of the Upper Kennett, I can vouch for the fact that such a thing was never dreamed of there. As a boy I had the run of a short stretch near the head of that classic river, and was accustomed to put a cast of Stewart's spiders or of Devonshire palmers and blue uprights over its well-fed fastidious fish, with some small success when the wind blew up stream. But it was dubious work, and the May-fly does not hatch much above Ramsbury.

If the personal note may be yet further borne with I should like to recall my own introduction to the new method and what a shock it gave me. It happened that I had been in foreign parts for a decade and doubtless had read some of the new dry-fly talk in *THE FIELD*, though most certainly without any particular grasp of its meaning. For the cult of Stewart and his four stock flies had waxed rather than waned with me among the less sophisticated trout of the Alleghany streams, a better school for bush-casting than for entomology and precision. But in the early Eighties I found myself once again in the familiar atmosphere of the Wiltshire Downs, and on this occasion by the banks of the Upper Avon in the Pewsey Vale, a veritable Rip van Winkle, as I was soon to discover. It was a sunny day, I remember, in early summer, just before the May-fly was due. I had two useful stock flies mounted and was whistling for a wind, the necessary concomitant of trouting in North Wiltshire from my primitive and reminiscent point of view. I had tried the two or three little rapids of my friend's water without success, and was sitting down in somewhat disconsolate fashion by a long still reach which grew glassier as the sun mounted higher and the scarcely perceptible zephyrs died wholly away. I possessed my soul in patience and gathered what consolation I might from being surrounded once again with the familiar landmarks of youth; the low barrier of Salisbury plain, with its fir-tufted summits; to the south the steeper ridge of the Marlborough Downs, and Martinsell hanging high and hazy upon the north. I wondered whether Archdeacon Grantley was still alive, whether the gig, whisking over the bridge yonder under the poplars, held Dr. Thorne, whether the distant clatter of a saddle-horse on the road was carrying the Vicar of Bullhampton with comforting news of Mary Lowther to his love-sick friend, Harry Gilmore. These dreams, however, were rudely broken by the sudden apparition of a strange angler upon the scene, who, after the usual courtesies, proceeded to make remarks of so hopeful a nature regarding the prospects of fish that I should have taken them for a sorry jest if he had not looked such a thorough workman, as, indeed, he very soon proved to be. He surveyed the long stretch beside us and seemed perhaps just a trifle put out that there were no fish breaking the water. This in no way deterred him, however, for moving cautiously up a few paces, and announcing shortly that he could see a good fish lying at a spot which seemed to me about

thirty yards away, asked me if I could not see it. I most assuredly could not, and in any case it did not appear to me to alter our somewhat gloomy prospects. The notion of hunting for one's fish before catching them seemed subversive of every canon of the angler's creed as I had known it.

However, this professor proceeded to convince me that the world had turned upside down since I had last thrown a fly amid these pastoral scenes, not merely by his long accurate casting and manipulation generally of a floating sedge but by actually taking this fish and coaxing up two more pounders, that he subsequently marked at a long range, from out of this sunlit and pellucid stretch. I learnt a good deal of theory, as we eat our lunch upon the bank, from this reconstructed Wiltshire angler who had once been even as myself, and from a very little practice in this strange method afterwards. My two flies were dismounted, not without a secret sense of humiliation, though it gave me some consolation to think that the whole business would have made my old master turn in his grave. But all this was nearly a quarter of a century ago, and Stewart had by then been ten years dead.

Dry-fly fishing is no longer a new thing, and has assuredly been exalted to a wonderful art by its best exponents ; but at the same time it has caused a great deal of nonsense to be talked by indifferent ones with a circumscribed experience. One might fancy, to hear some of these gentlemen, that fishing up a rapid stream with a wet-fly was beneath their notice. One longs to see them at it, especially where thick timber complicates the situation, as it often does. Indeed I have more than once actually stumbled on one of the smaller fry of this persuasion, from the middle or east South, seated in despair beside a Western stream with half his stock of flies in the surrounding trees and all at odds with the fair world about him. Dry-fly fishing, in short, has its tolerably well defined area, and its special class of water peculiarly adapted to the art ; waters, too, that were not as a rule conspicuously attractive in the old wet-fly days and not usually half as much fished or half as well stocked. It has given the chalk streams, and other slow moving ones, a wholly different value from of old and a fascination that cannot truly be said to have formerly distinguished most of them. Writing in 1857, Stewart remarks that not one in a hundred anglers fish up-stream. This is strange hearing now. Probably the heavier water of those days encouraged what is a pernicious habit in any but a big river. My own

recollections a decade later both in the West of England and the Border country are that one fished whichever way the wind favoured, but in very clear water always up. Stewart describes the much greater difficulties of the latter to beginners, and then attempts the still more difficult task of instructing them how to do it. I am inclined to think that few men are entirely comfortable and successful at fishing rapid water up-stream who have not acquired the knack in youth. There is so much instinct and intuition about it, not only as to where fish will be lying under different circumstances of water and weather, but in the "nicking" of that large proportion who do not show themselves when they come at the fly, and only give notice of their intent by various subtle sensations that are altogether indescribable. Then, again, more often than not, as I have already said, overhanging foliage is a serious factor to be encountered, not only in the actual casting but in the striking at short-rising fish. Though there are far more trout-fishers in the country than in the days when Stewart lamented their increase, a much greater proportion now seem to serve their apprenticeship as adults. One certainly sees far fewer ardent youngsters by the river-side; perhaps they have more distractions and are more catered for in gregarious fashion than of old. It must be easier for the adult novice to acquire some modest success at dry-fly fishing than in the vaguer and more tormenting art of fishing up broken waters, nor is it everybody that can wade a rocky bottom with facility and comfort. The rising fish shows the dry-fly man exactly where to cast; he knows precisely what he has got to do, and he can at least further his skill by practising on his own lawn.

One other great change has come over trout-fishing. In Stewart's day one might be almost certain that a native of the troutless counties of England, except a few groups from the big cities, took no account of this particular form of sport in their scheme of life. Now the cult is in no sense confined to its own districts. The prosperous classes go everywhere, and take a hand at everything. Even the chalk stream regions to-day are not fishing countries in the sense that Devon, Hereford, or Wales are, nor were they ever. I venture to think that in wet-fly times these chalk streams were not heavily fished by local rods and very little by strangers, though always closely preserved. Weeds, too, that hopeless obstacle in neglected chalk streams, were often never cut, while the stock of fish, in many places now so abundantly renewed,

had no doubt deteriorated. The number of trout and grayling now visible anywhere, in the lengthy club-water of the Wylie for instance, is an extraordinary sight; though it by no means follows that their would-be captors always catch their limit of five brace, or anything like it. The pedigree of many of these modern chalk stream fish, however, would be complicated. But at least three-fourths of the men who fish these streams are aliens, nor have the populace of these counties any fishing instincts like those of the North and West. For obvious reasons the humble fishermen, boys and men, who swarm in the latter, have never been an item in Wiltshire and Hampshire and are without piscatorial instincts. Local prejudice in angling matters, too, was tremendous when I was a boy, fortunate, as I think now, if only for the memories of much casual fishing in many different and far sundered districts. The flies of one region were laughed to scorn in another; London flies excited derision everywhere; even the fashion of a landing-net was enough to condemn an alien to outer darkness. In Weardale, I remember, where the trout were consistently small but shy, it was the thing to carry a large wooden-hooped net on a pole six feet long, pointed with a spike which was supposed to be a necessary support and guide while wading. Any more convenient contrivance was regarded with loathing, and it would have been no use protesting that you did not require support. The master of a decadent grammar-school of some half-dozen pupils, who employed his ample leisure till the Education Commissioners pounced on the venerable institution and gave him still more, devoted nearly a page of an admirable book on fishing, which I still have, to a denunciation of "cabbage-nets," his designation for every other variety. They made all their own rods too in that country, and they were the best-balanced and lightest I had ever at that time handled. A jointed rod from a tackle-maker was there regarded with only less disfavour than a convenient landing-net. Something of this fine old prejudice appears even in Stewart's pages and gives flavour to his utterances. As his editor truly says, his hints on rods are hopelessly out of date, but his disquisitions on the art of using them are admirable, shrewdly phrased, and as valuable as ever.

A. G. BRADLEY.

THE HEAD-HUNTERS OF FORMOSA

THE ignorance of the average person in geographical details was rather happily exemplified in the United States at the time of the Spanish War. When it was announced that an attack was about to be made on the Philippine Islands, the question was generally asked, "Where are they?" The subject of the present article is the island immediately north of the Philippines, which has only of late become familiar to all who followed the movements of the Baltic fleet.

Formosa lies near one of the great trade-routes, and is easily accessible from Hongkong, Nagasaki, or the China ports; but the fact remains that very few foreign residents in the Far East ever visit it: their holidays are generally spent at some of the famous health-resorts of China or Japan; and Formosa, lying out of the beaten track and not possessing a good climate, remains one of the few places unknown to Western men. Hence its great fascination, which is increased by the fact that the mountainous interior is inhabited by a race of bloodthirsty savages, whose chief delight is to sally forth on head-hunting raids. Few strangers (the exceptions being some intrepid Japanese explorers) have ever penetrated far into the wild mountain-country which is the home of these savages; even to go near its fringe is not always safe, and therefore to one who enjoys a spice of excitement a visit to the border-posts is a pleasant experience, while lovers of beautiful scenery are amply rewarded for their journey.

First a word as to the head-hunting tribes. They appear to be akin to the Dyaks of Borneo, but no definite study of their language or habits has yet been made, though interesting details will be found in Consul Davidson's voluminous book on Formosa. For hundreds of years the tribes, eight in number, have withstood their enemies, who have never been able to

penetrate to their fastnesses. The Chinese, who first invaded Taiwan (as they call the island) in comparatively recent times, found the occupation of the plains an easy task. Those of the aborigines who were willing to submit to their yoke were allowed to remain in peace, and are called Pe-po-hoan; but there was never any question of the Chinese making an entrance into the mountains. In their labyrinthine recesses an army would be immediately swallowed up; they are covered with the densest network of tropical vegetation, whose inaccessibility cannot be conceived by those who have never been beyond the shores of England. Neither did the Portuguese nor Dutch, when in their turn they seized Formosa, make any attempt to attack the savages in their lair, and to this day their mountains are unconquered. There is something attractive about a people which has never known a master. These savages may be wild and cruel, but they have never felt the yoke; liberty has existed among them from the dawn of history. It remains to be seen what success will attend the more systematic efforts of the Japanese to subdue them.

But this is not the place for dry facts of history. Some account of the methods by which the Japanese intend to introduce civilisation into the interior will be given later; I will now proceed to the details of my visit to this interesting people.

When passing through Formosa in 1904, I heard that it would be possible to obtain a glimpse of a few savages at one of the Japanese border-posts, and I eagerly embraced the opportunity. Before setting out I obtained as much information as I could collect on the subject of the savages in the capital Taipeh. This town, which owes its prosperity entirely to the Japanese, lies a few miles inland up a river, and some ten miles from the mountains. It is almost incredible that even the headquarters of the army should not be safe from the savages' raids, but it is the case. About a year before my visit a band of Atayals, the most northerly tribe, travelled swiftly down from the hills, and creeping in the dead of night into Banka, a suburb of Taipeh, began the deadly work of head-lifting, sparing neither age nor sex. The attack was so unexpected that no effectual resistance was made for some time. So soon as the police and infantry arrived on the scene the savages fled, but not before they had taken as trophies a score of heads. A raid on this scale is uncommon, but it shows what the hillmen are capable of under

a good leader. Their more usual method is to stalk the Chinese of either sex when they are engaged in tea-picking ; the savage creeps up unobserved to his victim, transfixes him with his spear, secures his head, and is lost in a moment in the neighbouring jungle. The villages lying in the borderland are occasionally attacked, but no regular warfare is carried on.

In order to get to the border, it is necessary to make an early start ; accordingly I set out at six o'clock one bright morning, and soon, leaving the bustling streets of the capital, found myself on the way along a rough unmetalled road. I had hired a jinricksha, which was drawn by a sturdy little Japanese and pushed by a stalwart Chinaman, the latter by no means, however, the better man. With these good runners I made rapid progress, and after two hours' jolting and bumping found myself at a large market-town, where I was only too glad to alight and stretch my stiffened limbs. Shortly before this we passed a mountain-battery returning from manœuvres near the hills, and I was much impressed by the smart appearance of the sturdy khaki-clad artillerymen, who were no doubt longing to be off to Manchuria, whence news of victory had just come in.

In the market-town referred to there are no troops, but a strong body of police, who go their rounds armed with rifles and bayonets. As there are few other Japanese in the town, I repaired to the police-station, where I was received by a courteous constable, who kindly procured me a mountain-chair (made of bamboo) and three bearers for the second stage of the journey. The road now ceased, and its place was taken by a rough track. We were ferried across a river, along whose banks our journey lay. The path ran now high above the river, now along its banks, while several times we were ferried across. We were gradually penetrating into the mountains, which became wilder in appearance as we advanced. The lower hills, however, were under cultivation, for the Pe-po-hoan and Hakka Chinese live in this borderland, and the soil is favourable for the cultivation of the tea-plant. Their occupation is a dangerous one, and they are a hardy race ; I have lived several years in different parts of China, but have never seen better-looking or more vigorous Chinamen than these Hakkas. In these parts it is hardly safe to travel alone, or at least unarmed, and it is a common sight to see coolies with a rifle on one shoulder and a bundle on the other, while a bandolier, or cartridge-belt, encircles their bodies.

After two hours over the rough mountain-tracks we arrived at Kushu, an outlying village of the Pe-po-hoan, placed where the glen has broadened out into a fertile valley, bright, as are the neighbouring hill-sides, with the pleasant green tea-shrubs. After a slight halt I set out on the final stage, and cross the river with the strange sensation that civilisation has been left on the bank behind me ; for after this there are no more villages. My destination is a border-post, held by the Japanese police who guard this part of the border. Soon, following the course of the river, we are in a narrow gorge ; the towering mountains, covered to their summits with the dense vivid green of the tropics, close us in on every side. Along the left bank of this river an aqueduct is being constructed, and hundreds of coolies, Japanese and Chinese, are employed on it. In time it will carry the pure mountain-water to the capital, a sign of the energy of the Colonial Public Works Department. It is not long now before, turning an abrupt bend in the path, I come in sight of Dogura, the chief station in this district. Here are several neat, clean Japanese houses, the residence of the Commissioner, the police quarters, and a little shop where various articles are kept for sale to the savages.

I was very kindly received by the Commissioner, who, with the natural courtesy of the Japanese, did his utmost to make me comfortable and to enable me to see as much as was possible. In order to get a glimpse of the savages I had to go on to the next post, which, being further from civilisation, is more often resorted to by them. I was now compelled to abandon my chair and walk, but the distance was not great, and there was no danger, as gangs of workmen were engaged on the aqueduct. In a few minutes, crossing the river by ferry again, I reached the next post, a small wooden structure, where, after a rest and some conversation with an English-speaking Japanese, I was rewarded for my exertions by the arrival of several savages, who came in to taste the sweets of civilisation in the form of *samshu* (native spirits) and canned goods.

This post had not long before been treacherously fired upon in the early morning, but no damage had been done. However, the savages are not allowed to carry rifles on their visits, and their only weapon was a long, heavy knife resembling the *machete* of the Filipino. The first arrival was a young boy, whose sole garment was a loin-cloth ; indeed, none of the men

wore anything else. He was a bright-faced lad with clear sparkling eyes, from which he gazed in wonder on the first white man he had ever seen. The men were small but athletic and supple ; they resembled the Malays in cast of feature and general appearance, but were treacherous and cruel-looking. The Japanese, unlike the Chinese, treat them well, and, encouraged by this, they come in very often to these posts, bringing with them deer-horns and hides of all kinds, which they barter for canned provisions and trinkets. Nevertheless they are not to be trusted ; their wild nature cannot but assert itself at times, and a close watch has to be kept on them. On the very day of my visit, when I was returning, I came across sad evidence of their untrustworthiness : we passed an unfortunate Chinaman whose white garment was stained with the blood which ran in streams from several wounds received from a lurking savage. He was fortunate to escape with his life.

On this occasion, however, the savages were very friendly ; they manifested as much interest in the white stranger as he did in them. Two or three women had accompanied them. There is none of the seclusion of women among these tribes which is such a feature of civilised Asia, and they contrast favourably in appearance with their sisters of the plains. Their dress was totally different from that of either the Japanese or Chinese ; but it must not be thought that they were content with a simpler costume, for the love of coquetry was evident especially with the maidens. The married women were satisfied with a skirt ; but the maidens were clothed in stylish fashion, with garments of one piece of gaudy crimson or green cloth wound round their busts and forming a skirt below. To add to their beauty they wore carved and painted pieces of bamboo through their ears. Men and women alike had their faces painted in a peculiar fashion, regular curves from the ears meeting at the lips ; green being the fashionable colour. The hair was not dressed, but was allowed to hang over the shoulders in the case of the women, while the men wore theirs wound round the head.

Thanks to the kindness of the Chief Inspector I was able to go to the remotest post, five miles up the gorge and deep in the bosom of the mountains, with an escort of sturdy little Japanese armed with service rifles and the keen-bladed *katana*. I followed a path leading along the banks of the river which dashes on its way over boulders. The hills here are covered with vegetation

so dense that it is impossible to make one's way through it. All the glories of the tropical forest are here, great ferns, cruel thorns, and a variety of trees unknown to those who have lived only in the temperate zones; among them the camphor-tree, so much sought after by civilised man, and so difficult to find. This variety of form and colour made the forest very beautiful, but I was not tempted to leave the track, for in the dense thickets there might be lurking unseen enemies, eager to add one more head to their collection, and—who knows?—the head of a white man might be regarded as a special prize. At length, crossing the river for the last time by a ferry-boat, provided even in these wilds by the Japanese, we reached the last outpost of civilisation, a small square shed perched on a hillock overlooking the foaming river. This station is the centre of a few huts where the camphor-gatherers live, and is occupied by a guard of police, who received me with the unfailing courtesy of the Japanese. One cannot fail to be impressed by these gallant men, who live in the midst of danger no less real because it is unseen, and who besides are constantly exposed to illness in this fever-stricken spot, but who are always cheerful and staunch in the performance of their duty, gallant servants of their Emperor.

One last look from this place, whence a good view is obtained over the countless miles of dark forest and the lofty green mountains (wooded to a greater height than any others in the world, report says), and we turn back, for beyond this place no one can go; the silent forest stretches for mile after mile beyond the ken of civilised man, its denizens, man and beast (and the mountains are filled with a great variety of carnivora and game) alike savage and unapproachable. The second part of the return journey is by boat, a thrilling performance,—twelve miles covered in two hours at most, down fifteen rapids—a fitting conclusion to an interesting and exciting day.

Such was my visit to one of the few places in the Far East where civilisation has not yet laid her hand. Before concluding I wish to give my meed of praise to the Japanese authorities for the manner in which they have set about the solution of the very difficult problem which for centuries has proved beyond the abilities of the Chinese. The Japanese, recognising that systematic warfare against the savages is impracticable (for a hundred thousand men would be lost in those dense jungles in a moment, and the ravages of fever would probably decimate an army), have

adopted the wiser policy of conciliation, entirely abandoning the treacherous methods of the Chinese mandarins. They are establishing a chain of posts which is intended in time to completely encircle the savage territory. Each of these border-posts is in constant communication with its neighbours. The telephone is used, and as daily visits are paid from the bases by patrols of armed police, there is no danger of their being cut off. The Chinese are being trained as police, and are protected from the savages. But the chief use of these border-posts is not for defence, but as a means of introducing civilisation. The savages are taught confidence in the Japanese, and are encouraged to bring in articles for barter in the villages and make themselves acquainted with the arts of civilisation. Not many of them have been touched as yet, but the thin end of the wedge has been inserted, and those who live in the remoter regions will be gradually reached. A few savages have even been induced to give up their children to the Japanese for education, and these children will doubtless be able to do wonders when they return to their people.

The Japanese Government is to be commended for its wise and conciliatory policy. There can be no doubt that in time it will achieve its purpose, which no armies could do; and that even these virgin forests will at length yield.

It is interesting to see a people which was itself comparatively unknown to the world half a century since, and is now at the height of its fame at the close of a successful war, working out the problem of civilising an uncivilised people,—a problem which is part of the burden of its colonial policy.

NORMAN SHAW.

THE REGULATION OF ADVERTISEMENTS

IN the old legends the wicked fairy did not usually accomplish her end by compelling or frightening her victim, or even by weaving spells ; as a matter of common form her method was to make a plausible suggestion. And, since it was only when the victim had followed the bad advice given that the malevolent witch could transform him into a cow, or a frog, or a piece of crockery, the almost invariable moral deduced was, do not listen to plausible suggestions unless you have good reason to believe that the person who makes them has no ulterior motive.

The present generation prides itself on very much greater wisdom than the simple folk of medieval times could claim ; and if a fairy now came to a school-child and offered three wishes, the precocious infant would have no difficulty in adopting Mr. Jerome's advice and refusing point blank, on the ground that the real aim of the lady was to make a fool of him. Similarly, if a gentleman with hoofs and a forked tail came to a modern youth and promised specious advantages on signing an agreement in his own blood, he would be referred to some respectable firm of solicitors and informed that writing fluids, made for the purpose, are now both cheap and legally recognised ; while to a mermaid a Don Juan of the twentieth century would explain that her request for his company at the bottom of the sea was impossible from elementary considerations. The particular confidence trick at the bottom of these three cases has in truth been worked out, a fact which may explain the prolonged absence of those who used to employ it. But it does not follow, although the child of the twentieth century stands astounded at his own sagacity, that the confidence trickster has not also brought himself up to date ; and an intelligent medieval freeman, if he could be brought back, might still have a few pertinent questions to put to the heir of all the ages. The worldly success of the company promoter might serve for one line of cross-examination, and Dr. Elijah Dowie

and Mr. Smyth-Pigott for another. But perhaps the visitor would be most impressed with one suggestion, alike delicate, personal, reiterated, obtrusive, persuasive, and pervasive. Probably his own sense of modesty in other circumstances might have prevented him from alluding to it, but as it continued to blaze at him from every hoarding he would doubtless feel in time that this reserve was mere squeamishness. Therefore the fact that some person entirely unknown to him urgently and ardently desired him to take a pill (promising him, of course, untold health and happiness if he did so) would become in its place a matter for his grave consideration.

Following his rude logic, he would conclude that as the invitation was delivered to him only as a member of the general public, those who gave it could neither claim a personal regard for him, nor a knowledge of his constitution ; nor, he might be persuaded, could they be actuated by motives of charity, for in such case it would be clear that they could give away gratis enough pills to upset every man, woman, and child in the United Kingdom for half the price the printed appeals cost them. He would therefore deduce (and, no doubt, the proprietors would acknowledge it frankly if he put it to them) that they desired him to take pills because of the profit that accrued to them when he purchased a box. An American would put it in his own way, that he was not advertising for his health ; the question for the cautious buyer would be whether he was doing it for a stranger's.

Applying the excellent moral instruction derived from his experience with the fairy, the mermaid, and the other personage, he would reluctantly but inevitably be driven to the negative conclusion ; that is, that his health was but a secondary consideration to the seller of the bolus, and that the latter's primary object was to get his money. To the use made of the purchase (provided it was not crammed down his own throat) he would probably be completely indifferent. Travelling by this safe road, therefore, the philosophic freeman would come to an obvious conclusion ; and if everybody took as much pains, the trade in aloes would decrease and, it may be, certain machinery well fitted for its purpose by a wise Providence would have very much less written off yearly for depreciation.

But at this point it is impossible to ignore the fact that arguments which seem irrefutable to some minds do not appeal at all to others. Placards by the million cost much money ; putting

them up costs more, and of course railway companies and individuals owning suitable sites for hoardings exact appropriate rents. Without going through a chain of very obvious deduction it may be assumed that this money ultimately comes out of the pockets of those who buy pills, and presumably swallow them ; and as at least one manufacturer is known to enjoy an income which could be measured on the scale of an American millionaire's, the sale of his concoctions must plainly be colossal.

Logical persons,—those who read these pages, and at whom advertisers might no doubt bawl a request to take a pill from every visible hoarding for a hundred years without the slightest effect—will find no connection between the excellence of pills, soap, beef-juices, tobacco, or whiskey and that of pictures and appeals to buy them, other than the fact that the purchaser of an advertised article pays for both article and advertisement. Therefore the more costly the latter, whether by reason of its artistic style, its dimensions, or its ubiquity, the less he gets of his money's worth. Production on a large scale is of course made possible by advertising, but the cost of world-wide advertisement usually represents very much more than the difference between wholesale and retail prices.

For the state of mind of those who are persuaded by advertisements, perhaps a hint may come from an observation of the Butcher to the Beaver in *THE HUNTING OF THE SNARK*. After giving the animal a lesson in arithmetic, and emphasising his chief points by repetition, he remarks, "What I say three times is true." The only difference seems to be that the intelligence of the folk who buy articles because they are puffed seems now to require a fiftyfold or hundredfold iteration before they consider the proposition proved. It has been said with regard to advertising a new article that an expenditure of £50,000 is thrown away, £100,000 just comes back, and £250,000 doubles itself. Perhaps a mathematician could thus calculate exactly how often the average buyer is likely to see a given advertisement, and what amount of repetition persuades him.

The old habit of believing what is printed is apparently still prevalent and must account for some successes. Testimonials, too, as appeared clearly in the case of the electric belts which generated no current, can be got for anything ; and whatever may be thought about the intelligence of those who give them it is not necessary to impugn their honesty.

The practical and economic problems raised by the enormous growth of advertising have perhaps an importance which is not apparent at first sight. Huge sums spent upon armies of printers, paper-makers, and bill-stickers represent an industry that is very indirectly productive, if at all; and the tendency of competition is to make advertising rather more than less expensive. Probably, on the same principle that a disease inoculates against itself, or that the person who is once bitten shies twice, the great majority will ultimately discover that a puff is no real recommendation, and then advertising will cease to pay. But this consummation still seems far distant, and meanwhile any distrust that has been created by exaggerated statements has made matters worse; for if a tradesman can boil a fairly edible jam, or mix a decently palatable cocoa, nothing short of a most expensive and broadcast pæan of praise with flamboyant testimonials will convince the public that a new article is on the market at all, and in consequence he has to sell it at twice its value, or more, to get a profit.

Then again, though it may be urged that those impervious to the blandishments of young ladies sprawling over the hoardings and having their feet washed with somebody's soap have no grievance in the free supply of artistic pictures for nothing whenever they go for a walk, and that a man who resents the sheer vulgarity of selfish assertion is altogether too delicately-minded for the twentieth century, it is generally realised that the hoarding or open-air advertisement is capable of gross abuse, and that such abuse actually exists in many concrete forms. The classical instance of the advertisement on the Great Pyramid still probably ranks by itself; but posters of staring letters and crude colouring are now produced in large numbers, and often are placed where they spoil and degrade beautiful scenery. No doubt some are drawn by real artists, and have whatever merits their use allows; but even Botticelli, using his own scroll-work and his own dancing maidens to invite the passer-by to eat somebody's sauce and pickles and beware of substitutes, would be hard put to it to make his production tolerable in a view of Dover Cliff or Durham Cathedral. And when the merciful twilight softens and finally obliterates the caricatures of royal personages telling each other that somebody's beer is the best, or of eminent statesmen acting as lay-figures for the nearest slop-tailor (what harm would there be in a reasonable law of *lèse-majesté* to prevent such outrages?), the wayfarer is confronted with the dip-and-dazzle electrical

arrangements, coiling and uncoiling with the most intolerable persistence. If it is possible by use or effort of will to overlook a hoarding, and see a landscape as if it did not exist, a hundred incandescent lamps blinking in and out cannot be ignored so readily.

However, to the reformer who seeks a remedy several very obvious difficulties present themselves. If it was to nobody's interest or profit to sell him anything he did not want to buy, advertising would at once die a natural death; but he would probably consider a complete socialism for this one end as too drastic, and nothing short of this would be effective on such lines. Moreover, a man objecting to advertisements and desirous of abolishing them would have some ethical difficulty in demonstrating what is wrong in the theory of advertising,—that vendors are simply bringing notice of their wares to purchasers desirous of buying such articles.

Thus, on the assumption that advertisements must continue until everybody is educated not to believe statements because they are printed or very often repeated (which is not likely to be in the immediate future), control rather than prohibition must be the watchword of the reformer.

It may be right to point out that under the present law control is not entirely absent, though an irritable artist travelling on an English railway might imagine otherwise. Apart from the laws regarding libel and regulating decency, to which advertisements as well as all other publications are subject (in the latter respect a special statute passed in 1889 now applies to advertisements), a few by-laws are in existence regulating such matters as sky-signs, and though hoardings are not taxed, as some would desire, they are now subject to be rated. In this connection the London Hackney Carriage Act may also be mentioned, which so long ago as 1853 prohibited advertisements by "crawling" vehicles in the Metropolis.

But it is clear that this control is in some cases too limited; and following a movement in which a London journalist took a prominent part, a short Bill, under the title of the Advertisements Regulation Act, was last year introduced into the House of Lords by Lord Balfour of Burleigh. Unfortunately it did not pass into law; and as the agitation is non-political, and its success might be supposed to menace certain powerful interests, its prospects are somewhat doubtful. Were it not for vested interests, the

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power to be given to a Borough or County Council to make by-laws to prevent the disfigurement of "the amenities of a pleasure resort, public park, promenade or residential district" or "the natural beauty of a landscape" would seem to be both reasonable and necessary, and it is to be hoped that this sub-section at least will become law before long. By another sub-section the owners of existing advertisements offending in this respect are given a certain reasonable time to remove them, and yet another authorises the limitation in height of advertisement hoardings. An amendment, proposed by Lord Camperdown, dealing with the placing of advertisements upon trees, walls, fences, and the like, without the consent of owners, was added, a clause calculated to keep country roads clearer; but a useful provision enabling the authorities to deal with "advertising by means of dazzling light or special use of light and sound, advertising on pavements and scattering of advertising papers," was dropped, perhaps as jetsam.

If this Bill were passed as a whole, including the last-mentioned clause, much improvement might be effected, especially if a model by-law was directed to the protection of the railway passenger from eyesores. This should deal drastically with field advertisements clearly meant for railway passengers and disfiguring beautiful scenery, which to the patriotic ought to include every view of British field, mountain, or woodland. If this were done advertisers would probably soon become reconciled to it, for competitive clamour is expensive and compulsory silence for all in this particular direction would at least mean retrenchment, of which no rival could take advantage. The real losers would of course be the owners of land adjacent to railways, who would cease to receive the rents paid for many ugly erections. It may be observed, as an answer to any grievance that they were deprived of an Englishman's right to use his land as he pleased, that no such unqualified right exists under our system. "*Sic utere tuo ut alienum non lēdas* (use your land, but not to injure your neighbour)," is a maxim whose force anyone who smoked out his vicinity with continuous bonfires, or established a fish-manure business in a fashionable London suburb, would soon discover. And to extend the law dealing with offences to the organs of smell and hearing to those affecting the sense of sight would involve no new principle, though of course its application would have to be carefully safeguarded. The railway companies themselves should be subject

to the regulations, with, if necessary, a saving clause for advertisements in open stations.

One exception to Lord Camperdown's amendment suggests itself, that it would have to be abrogated within a fortnight of an election in favour of all candidates, otherwise a political landowner might seriously prejudice the chances of an opponent. Perhaps such an exception would be tacitly allowed without express words.

Reform on such lines would put an end to one kind of abuse of advertisements, but would not touch another almost as bad, the dishonest announcements too often found in the advertisement columns of newspapers and periodicals. A type much in vogue at present may be suggested by the statement that Professor Bunkum Q. Walker, of the United States, after forty years of continuous travelling, has at length found a herb in the forests of South America which positively cures all ills that flesh is heir to. Professor Walker is far too rich and philanthropic to use this great discovery for his own ends, but gives it freely, merely wishing to know who desire to avail themselves of this stupendous opportunity. Address, Box 9999, Eden City; remember postage is $2\frac{1}{2}d$.

In considering such rubbish some propositions are obvious. It is clear that no one need buy a newspaper, that no buyer need read matter which is openly advertisement, and it may be argued that if any man chooses to do so and believes stuff of this sort no Act of Parliament could save him. However, the same chain of reasoning would apply to a company prospectus, for the statements in which promoter and directors are now held strictly responsible. And, as advertisements are just as much invitations to the public to buy wares as a prospectus is to buy shares, and pill-takers are at least as feeble a folk as investors, the rules applicable to protect either class might very well be of the same stringency. At present there are certain technicalities checking the effect of the doctrine of "making good representations," and though in at least one case an advertiser who offered the definite sum of £100 to anybody who suffered from influenza after using his nostrum was compelled to fulfil his promise, there is no adequate machinery to deal with a deliberately misleading statement in an advertisement, however profitable to its maker. An Act making advertisers responsible on the lines of the Directors' Liability Act of 1890 could do no honest tradesman harm, and would be

a powerful engine to deal with fraudulent advertisements when those responsible were within the jurisdiction.

In considering how to deal with Continental or American frauds of the Bunkum Q. Walker type, the delicate question must be faced, as to how far the proprietors of a journal ought to be responsible for inserted advertisements which are fraudulent, either on the face of them or otherwise. That there should be no responsibility would, if the law were altered as above, protect the foreign swindler at the expense of his English brother, which the most ardent Free Trader would hardly desire; full responsibility would make journalism a very different thing from what it is at present, and perhaps raise the price of newspapers a hundred per cent. or more. This might be thought too large a price to pay to save the foolish from their folly. But liability where the advertiser required money to be sent abroad (the fiction of free treatments, or free portraits, or free distributions could soon be swept aside) might be introduced, and would stop many apparently profitable French and American swindles. It might also be useful if, when an advertisement was found to be fraudulent, every newspaper which had inserted it was compelled to devote a space at least as large as that of the original advertisement to the announcement that it was a fraud, specifying also the dates and particulars of the original insertions.

In this connection the example of a morning newspaper recently started may be commended to its contemporaries. Not only is the announcement made that the advertisement columns will be supervised to eliminate anything fraudulent or offensive (which of course is done elsewhere), but it is also stated that the insertion of any advertisement which does not accurately describe the article sold will be stopped upon the purchaser producing satisfactory evidence to the advertisement manager that this is the case. This rule properly enforced would probably stop many advertisements now appearing in periodicals owned by proprietors who might well have initiated it for themselves, considering their position in journalism.

By a system introduced in the United States, the Post Office can get a "fraud-order" against an advertiser, by virtue of which authorities have power to open letters addressed to him and return money to the senders,—a drastic and effective way of dealing with the matter, which some have wished to see inaugurated in England. But as the law can punish an actually

fraudulent advertiser by imprisonment and thus stop his operations quite as surely, the fraud-order would only be useful in cases stopping short of indictable fraud. And since no legal offence would be in question, its justification would have to be that the Post Office ought to be able to refuse its assistance upon certain specified grounds. Post Office censorship, however, is looked on with some jealousy in our islands ; and an advertiser by using successive "accommodation addresses" and slight changes of verbiage might reap new harvests long before legal process could come abreast of his performances.

Perhaps, on the whole, the voluntary efforts of newspaper proprietors make the best promise of stopping abuses effectively ; and the writer here offers one reform as a suggestion for all respectable journals, which by agreement they could effect without troubling the Legislature. Testimonials, as seen above, can be procured for every useful or useless article under the sun, and, as they are just as likely to mislead as to inform, their use should be checked or abolished. This could be done if editors and proprietors banded themselves together to make the watch-word *no testimonials printed* the hall-mark of their good repute. And if this be Utopian, the portraits of those who give the testimonials should be suppressed as a preliminary measure. To judge from most of these, quack remedies have their greatest use and efficacy in the systems of potential murderers.

In conclusion, a check to the enterprise of advertisers may seem to some despotic ; but that Englishmen should preserve their heritage undefiled is worth a little despotism, and that they should have to tell the truth is probably in the end the lesser hardship. On such principles the regulation of advertisements on the lines suggested is a matter at least worth consideration.

ALFRED FELLOWS.

A CASE FOR THE PSYCHICAL SOCIETY

"I WAS a new chum then," he began, turning a fresh bottle the regulation three times over against his own palm, "a new chum, cadetting with old man Kennet out on the West Coast there."

He jerked his head towards the wall where hung the gorgeous portrait of a Highlander that advertised a popular whiskey. The speaker was a hard-faced stockrider, with a red moustache, a hide like sun-dried brick, and a knowledge of cattle-beasts and of the legs of a horse. His capacity for malt liquors I have only once seen equalled. Who or what he was, or may once have been, I do not know, except that he was doing stock-work for Huntland and Nobuck, the big auctioneers and cattle-dealers of Auckland. We met after a cattle-sale in the one and only "hotel" of a certain embryonic township, and we talked because there was nothing else to do. Although he had drunk the better part of a bottle of remarkably inferior whiskey when he told the tale, he was perfectly and culpably sober, which is a worse sign than mere commonplace intoxication. And this was the story he told that night between the drinks.

It was one day in the winter of '81, I think, but it's getting a long way astern now, so I won't be certain. Anyhow we'll say '81 for argument. One day a chap called Baltbee—you've met him?—a hard nut, wasn't he?—well, he and I were out after some stray steers, part of a store mob we'd lost on the Big Flat. You know the spot?—one of those places the Almighty forgot to finish—couple o' hundred square miles of gum-land, where you may ride all day across burnt bare ridges and tea-tree swamps and only meet two lean steers and a half-starved gum-digger. I believe the Government has induced settlers to take up blocks there now, where they'll plough pipeclay and live on the Advances

to Settlers racket at five per cent. for a few years, and then file their schedules ; but in those days there was only one house on the Flat, and that was on the far edge of it down by the creek.

That afternoon we rode right across down to the harbour-side and saw a few poor frames of cattle, but no sign of our brand. Just at sundown we drew up on a bit of a rise, and took a last look round for the beasts we wanted, but there wasn't a sign of them. Baltbee cursed and said : " We'll have to give it best and let 'em go. Come on ; it'll be dark in half-an-hour."

He shoved in the spurs and went down the slope at a gallop.

I rode a big-boned brute of a half-bred mare, with a mouth like a steam-launch, and as pretty a figure-of-eight buck-jump as ever I left the top of. Being a new chum, of course they had stuck me on the worst mount in the place. Well, like a youngster without sense, when I saw Balt jam in the spurs, of course I forgot the mare's ways and stuck in mine too ; and after that I seemed to be playing leap-frog on a switchback railway. When I came down the third time the mare had gone on, and I landed on my back in a little swampy creek below. While I was wallowing around in the slime trying to get on end, I heard Balt's voice in the distance bellowing compliments to the mare while he tried to catch her ; and just as I waded ashore, knee-deep in oozy green mud, he reappeared on foot. His hands were covered with blood, and he was wiping a sheath knife on a bunch of tea-tree.

"Where's the mare ?" I said.

"Gone home," says he calmly.

"Gone home ! Confound it, why didn't you catch her ?"

"Couldn't run fast enough."

"Where's the grey ?" He rode a grey gelding.

"Over the ridge there," says he, pointing, as if nothing had happened. "Put his foot in a gum-hole, came a purler, and broke his near fetlock. I saw he was done for, so cut his throat."

"Here's a nice mess ! How're we to get home ?"

"Must get in and foot-slog it, that's all."

It wasn't much of a contract I can tell you, the thick end of thirty miles from the station, ten from anywhere, and night coming down. Being a new hand I thought it a deuce of a bad fix, and looked sick enough, I suppose, especially as I was wet through and smothered in foul green slime. It was one of

those cloudless winter evenings with faint southerly breezes and a touch of frost in the air. I shivered.

"We'll make for Shag Point," said Baltbee. "Needn't look so blue ; it's only about five or six miles."

Well, there was no help for it, so we took the saddle from the dead quad and set off. The dark came up over those God-forsaken bare ridges behind us like a racer up the straight. The stars lit up all at once, as if they'd been turned on ; and the harbour faded out into a dull steel-grey sheet on the right. It was a rotten spot to spend a night. Far ahead a light winked out among trees.

"See that ?" said Baltbee. "That's our mark,—old John McCandlish's store at the Point."

We trudged on. The air fell chilly, and there was a frosty pale glow above the red streak on the mountains in the west ; you know that look in the sky ? I heard Balt swear softly.

"What's up ?" I asked.

"Fog," he said, pointing to the sea.

A thin haze was gathering upon the water, and presently long wisps of vapour came creeping up the creeks and swamps and settled in the hollows of the tea-tree flats. Baltbee quickened the pace, but I was humping the saddle with the girths over my shoulder, and could not keep up with him.

"Step out, man," he said. "Put some sprint in it, unless you want to bunk under the lee of a tea-tree bush to-night."

I did my level best, but he struck a five-mile-an-hour gait that set me puffing before we'd gone five chains. I began to lag. Suddenly he stopped and swung round. "Give me that saddle," he said, and snatching it from me swung it over his shoulder, and set off again. Even then I had to trot to keep at his heels.

Gradually the fog drew down over us. In the starlight the mist came floating round us in cold ghostly shreds that seemed to rise out of the ground, until as we walked along the bare crest of a ridge, we were on an island in a still grey sea. The fog rose just like a flood-tide round our knees, and presently rolled round our faces and swallowed us. Still Baltbee tore along, but slower. I could see his burly back like a smudge on the greyness of the mist through which starlight still dribbled down. But after a bit as the fog thickened it grew black as charcoal, and every now and again Balt would sing out, "Are you there, youngster ?" and would stand until I came up with him.

We'd been following one of the ridges by an old native trail, but now we lost it and suddenly found ourselves floundering first in a deep swamp and then in high scrub, dripping with wet mist. I heard Balt saying things to himself in the clammy darkness.

After a bit we made high ground again, but had not gone far when Baltbee suddenly flung down the saddle.

"Tell you what," he said; "it's my belief that we're going back in our own tracks." He stood still listening. "Can't make it out," he went on; "we ought to hear the sea, but I don't. You stand here by the saddle while I prospect around a bit. Sing out like a little man if you hear me shout."

I heard him crackling away among burnt tea-tree stumps, and after what seemed a longish time he *cooeed*. I answered.

"That's no good," he said when he got back. I couldn't see him, though he stood within a yard of me. Then he set off in another direction. As I heard his footfalls grow faint and die away, in the dead silence there came a little whispering sound above my head. I stretched out a hand and struck something cold and hard. For a second it scared me; then I dropped to it that I'd been standing all this time under a tree and hadn't known it.

Just then came a far-away *cooe*, and presently Balt made his way back, guided by my shouts.

"A cabbage-tree," said he, feeling the bark; "that's good. These trees generally mark the old native tracks along the ridges hereabouts. We can't be so very far out of our reckoning."

He struck off in a new direction, but before he'd gone twenty yards found himself swamped. He tried another course and in five paces ran into high scrub. After two or three more attempts he gave it up. "Can't understand it," he growled; "seem to be swamps all round us. It's no use; we must just camp here till daybreak."

This was not joyful. I was wet and cold and uncommon hungry; but there was no help for it, and we set to work to make a fire. It was no easy job, but we'd plenty of matches and we managed it at last. We collected fuel, got up a decent blaze, spread Balt's oilskin coat (which was strapped to the saddle) over a low mound at the foot of the tree; and there we sat and smoked and tried to think we were warm.

About midnight I rose to fetch more wood for the fire and crossed to the high tea-tree just beyond the firelight. When I turned round again and looked at the camp, right in the fog-halo round the fire where Balt lay with his head on the saddle, to my surprise I saw another figure. It was a tall man with a bushy beard and thin dark face who sat on the opposite side of the fire to Baltbee. I'd never seen the chap before.

"Good-evening," I said as I sat down ; "have you got bushed like us ?"

The man gave a little nod but did not speak. He sat and gazed into the flames and stretched long skinny hands to the warmth. It struck me that something was the matter with him, though what I couldn't exactly say. He was a miserable-looking chap, with a morose sort of face, and the air of a man just recovering from an illness.

Baltbee woke, looked at him, and tried to talk to him ; but the man only nodded without even looking up, and drew a little nearer to the fire. As he moved I caught sight under his hat-brim of a big blue scar on the left temple.

"Were you out gum-digging ?" I asked, for the only people that came to the flats were the gum-diggers.

He took no notice of the question, and I saw that his eyes were dull and glassy as though he were half asleep. "He's ill," I whispered to Baltbee.

After a while we tired of trying to get anything out of the man and made up our minds that he was either very ill or dumb. He just sat there, silent and gaunt with the firelight flickering across his face. The thin veil of fog between him and me made his figure look hazy, almost transparent.

I was tired, and presently fell into a doze. Some movement awoke me. The stranger had risen and stood staring down at me with his dull eyes and a kind of wistful look like a dog's in them.

"Are you going ?" I asked.

He did not seem to hear, but turned without a word, passed out of the ring of light and melted into the fog. I felt uncomfortable somehow ; that stranger's face stayed with me. Baltbee stirred and woke ; I was glad of his company. "Hullo !" he said ; "where am I ? Oh, I remember,—where's the undertaker chap ?"

"Gone," I said ; "he walked off without a word."

"Unsociable cuss," said Balt; "I couldn't get a syllable out of him." He yawned, turned his other side to the fire to dry, and settled off to sleep again. But for a long while I could not do the same. I kept starting up, imagining that stranger had returned and was looking down at me.

Next morning I woke in the raw-smelling dawn, feeling like a corpse. The fire had burnt out; the damp hung in big drops in my hair, and I felt sick for want of food. The fog had thinned a little, and I saw that the cabbage-tree under which we had spent the night stood in an angle of a patch of tea-tree scrub. I got up to stretch my stiff joints, and saw about twenty paces off the remains of a sod-chimney such as gum-diggers build to their tents; but it was old and fallen, and the tent-poles were rotting on the ground.

The fog lifted with the sunrise and we found ourselves hardly half a mile off the right track. Not far away under the lee of a little rising ground a couple of gum-diggers' tents showed up white against the dark scrub. It didn't take us long to reach those tents, you can bet; and we soon were giving those gummies a hand to get some tucker ready, for we were hungry as sharks.

"One of your mates was over at our camp in the night," said Balt as we sat wolfing down the bacon and camp bread, "but I don't see him here."

"It wasn't none of our push," said the eldest of the four diggers. "None of us left camp last night."

"Well, somebody came to our fire, stayed an hour or so, and then cleared."

"What was he like?" asked the digger.

"A surly ghost o' misery. He wouldn't speak a word."

There was a long silence before one of the men said: "You were camped by the mound under the cabbage-tree, I expect?"

"Yes," replied Balt, looking surprised; "how did you know?"

The men said nothing, but glanced at each other.

"Are there any other diggers about here?" I asked.

"Not a soul nearer than the Point," answered one.

"Some swagger that missed his way, I suppose," said Baltbee. No more was said, but I felt somehow that our hosts could have told us more if they'd chosen, and I didn't like their reserve.

We left them presently, and about nine o'clock reached the

store at the Point. It was the ordinary sort of little slab-built shanty you see around, with a corrugated iron roof and a big wooden chimney. It stood in a poor forsaken spot, but there was deep water close to the rocks where the little steamer stopped two or three times a week. Old McCandlish was not a bad sort. He trotted out some liquor,—sly grog of course that never had paid duty, but was the real thing. We sampled it while we waited for the steamer, which was not due until mid-day.

As we sat round the big fireplace Baltbee told the old store-keeper about our visitor of the night before and asked if he'd seen a sundowner about. McCandlish cocked his eye at us and gave a grim smile. "Ay," said he slowly; "you saw *him*, did you? You'd be camped under yon cabbage-tree with a bit mound under it near an old camp chimney, I expect?"

"You know that too?" cried Baltbee, regularly taken aback. "Look here,—there's something queer about this. How d'you know?"

"Well, ye see," said McCandlish slowly, hitching up his blue dungaree trousers, with a strange look. "I've heard o' the place afore. What like a body would he be?" Baltbee described the man. "H'm, h'm," said the old man in his infernal deliberate fashion. "Would ye know his likeness if ye saw it?" He turned and rummaged among the shelves behind the gum-bags and cases of tinned meat. "Would that be the man?" he asked, holding out a dirty photograph.

"It's the very man," said Baltbee; "who is he?"

"He *was* a gum-digger body by the name o' Shalders—Shotover Shalders was the name he always got. He made a pile once, so they say, in the Shotover mine at the Thames; but like a heap o' mining gentry he was terrible lavish wi' his siller. It just slipped through his fingers like sand. And what with this and that, the drink, and all manner o' daft speculations, he just came down and down, and in the end did what many a better man has done, just shouldered his spade and spear and away to the gum-digging. He used to come to me for his stores and that. I took his gum of course, and the balance of his cheque would go down his throat, for he was an awful one for his glass. He'd a wife and bairns, too, but I'm thinking it was just the wife that sent him astray. I mind on seeing her at the Thames years back,—a fine upstanding black-eyed lass, with a small foot and a lang tongue. Poor Shotover, he was terrible fond o' the

woman, till she run off wi' a man they called Trent and fair broke his heart. Shotover went a bit daft over it, poor body."

As old Mac stopped to fill his pannikin, Baltbee asked, "And what become of him?"

"Oh, he just put a bullet through his own head one day; that's what became of him," replied Mac. "There's some thinks there was queer work. Some o' the diggers they will have it there was foul play. They say Trent was over this way and—but that's just havers. What for would Trent be wanting to kill him? More like he'd keep clear of him. Anyway poor Shotover he never came down this way to get his drop or sell his gum, and when two-three weeks went and he didn't come I just ran over to his camp. He was owing me money, you see. But all I found was hardly worth the burying. It was summer time, you understand. Well, but I buried what there was under the cabbage-tree yonder myself with his own spade, and there he is. Ay, ay, poor Shotover, that was the last o' him. It'll be good five year back now."

"Good lord!" I said. "We must have been sitting all night on his grave."

"I was thinking that," said Mac quietly. "You see, you're not the first that's done that; and there's a good few has seen him too. I doubt he's no just very easy where he is."

Well, that was old Mac's yarn, and what clinched it was that about a year after that night a green hand of a gummy, that hadn't quite got the trick of it yet, went poking around that very cabbage-tree with his gum-spear, got on something hard, and not having caught on to the feel of the gum, thought he'd struck a patch, and started and dug up the mound. The first thing he howked out was a human skull, and after that he jacked it up and tried another field. He told me himself there was a bullet-hole in the skull.

But the queerest part of the thing is that two years after that I met Shotover Shalders himself. Alive? You bet,—as much alive as I am. It was in the bar of the Tivoli in Apia, Samoa. You know it? Nice, roomy, cool place. He was standing at the bar when I went in. I'd just landed. I knew the face at once, but till someone mentioned the name couldn't remember where I'd heard it. Then I began to wonder things. I shouted drinks and made an excuse to talk. "I think we've met before," I said.

He gave me a blank look. "Where was that?" he asked.

"Don't you recollect?—the night you came into our camp on the Big Flat beyond Shag Point?"

"No, I don't," he said.

It struck me he didn't seem to want to recollect. "We were camped on the mound under the cabbage-tree there,—just by your old camp," I went on.

The man's face was naturally sallow, but now it turned a faint green. There was something as like funk as could be in his eyes for a moment; then he gave me a look that wasn't very loving; but that passed like a flash. He gulped down his drink, and then turned sharp round to me and asked me to come up to his house and talk.

When we were sitting cross-legged on the *tappa*-mats on the floor of one of those dome-roofed native huts, I tried him again. I was sure there was something funny behind it all, and meant to get to the bottom of it if I could. So I asked him if he knew he was dead, and told him McCandlish's story. Shalders didn't answer at once, but I fancied a look of relief came over his face. A Samoan girl squatted in a corner before one of those four-legged *tanea* things, stirring and straining *kava*. I can see Shalders now, sitting like a white carved image in the brown dusk of the hut, and the trade-wind piping in the tops of the cocoanut palms outside, and flapping the mat-walls of the house. He waited until he'd swallowed his *kava*,—soapy-looking stuff, isn't it?—and sent the cocoanut *hipu* spinning back along the mats to the girl in regular Samoan style, and then he turned to me.

"It's true enough," he said slowly, "that I was gum-digging on the Big Flat a good many years back, but I certainly didn't peg out, as you see. And I've been here five years." As he spoke he pushed back his hat and I saw the scar on his left temple.

"But it's only three years since I saw you there," said I.

He shook his head. "I left New Zealand in '77," he replied, "went over to Sydney, got drifting round the Islands, and fetched up here. I've never been back to New Zealand again."

"But I saw you myself," I cried; "I knew your face again the minute we met."

A kind of grim smile came over his face, but I fancied he looked rather puzzled himself. "There must be some mistake," he said. "Perhaps I've a double knocking round. Anyhow it wasn't me."

I stared. The man meant what he said, that was plain enough. I came near doubting my own eyes. "But old MacCandlish says he buried you himself," I said.

"He's been pulling your leg, I expect," Shalders replied a little hastily.

"But what about this?" I asked, and told him the story of the gum-digger finding the skull.

Shalders at that became suddenly testy. "What the devil has that got to do with me?" he asked with a black glance. And then in a moment he recovered himself and laughed,—a curious laugh. "You're an inquisitive chap," he said. "But—well, I don't mind telling you; I *was* over in New Zealand three years ago, and sure enough I did drop into your camp that night; but there's business reasons why I didn't want it known, so keep it to yourself, will you?" He laughed again, a little awkwardly. "Have another? *Talo-fa!*" he emptied the cocoanut again and rose.

As I walked back to the landing-place I thought of that last speech of his and I knew he had lied then, just as surely as I knew he had told the truth when he said he had never been back in New Zealand. But then, who was the man that lies buried beneath the lonely cabbage-tree on the Flat? How came he to have a bullet-hole in his skull? Why did Shalders lie to me,—unless to satisfy my curiosity and hide something? I took the trouble to enquire, and could lay my hand on half a dozen witnesses to prove that Shalders had not left Samoa for more than five years before I met him. Yet if I am certain of anything, I am certain that it was him I saw in our camp that night. There was the scar on his head in proof. The question is, can a living man be in two places at once, or appear where he is not? I tell you the thing has puzzled me properly. What do you think?

That is the stockman's yarn. What I think is that he was sober and appeared to be speaking the truth. The explanation seems a matter for the Society for Psychical Research.

GEORGE MAKGILL.

